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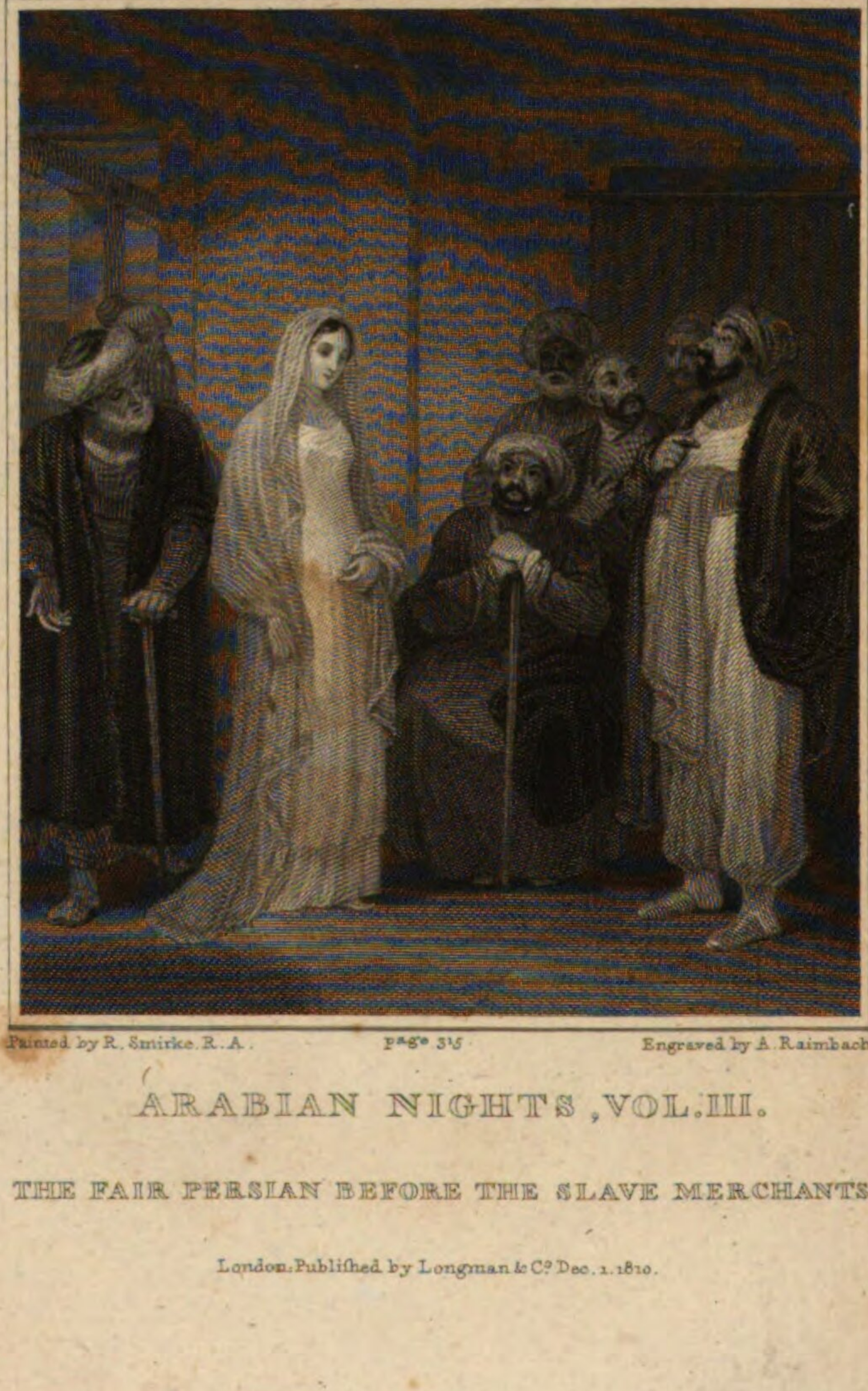

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ARABIAN NIGHTS, VOL. III.

THE FAIR PERSIAN BEFORE THE SLAVE MERCHANTS.

London. Published by Longman & Co. Dec. 1. 1810.

THE

ARABIAN NIGHTS

ENTERTAINMENTS,

CAREFULLY REVISED, AND OCCASIONALLY CORRECTED

From the Arabic.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SELECTION OF NEW TALES,

Now first translated from the Arabic Originals.

ALSO,

AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

RELIGION, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS, OF THE MAHUMMEDANS.

BY JONATHAN SCOTT, LL.D. OXFORD.

Late Oriental Professor at the Royal Military, and East India Colleges, &c. &c.

WITH ENGRAVINGS FROM PAINTINGS BY SMIRKE.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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ARABIAN NIGHTS

ENTERTAINMENTS.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETIETH NIGHT.

AFTER Schemselnihar had quieted the fears of the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, she ordered the slave, her confidant, to go and speak to Mesrour, and the two other officers, till she had put herself in a condition to receive them, and could send her to introduce them. Immediately she ordered all the windows of the saloon to be shut, and the painted cloth on the side of the garden to be let down; and after having assured the prince and Ebn Thaher that they might continue there without any fear, she went out at the gate leading to the garden, and closed it upon them: but whatever assurance she had given them of their safety, they were full of apprehension all the while they remained there.

As soon as Schemselnihar had reached the gar-

den with the women that had followed her, she ordered all the seats, which served the women who played on the instruments, to be placed near the window, where the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher heard them; and having got things in order, she sat down upon her silver throne: she then sent notice to the slave her confidant to bring in the chief of the eunuchs, and his two subaltern officers.

They appeared, followed by twenty black eunuchs all handsomely clothed, with cimeters by their sides, and gold belts of four inches broad. As soon as they perceived the favourite Schemselnihar at a distance, they made her a profound reverence, which she returned them from her throne. When they approached, she arose and went to meet Mesrour, who advanced first; she asked what news he brought? He answered, Madam, the commander of the faithful has sent me to signify that he cannot live longer without seeing you; he designs to do himself that pleasure this night, and I am come to give you notice, that you may be ready to receive him. He hopes, madam, that you will receive him with as much pleasure as he feels impatience to see you.

At these words the favourite Schemselnihar prostrated herself to the ground, as a mark of that submission with which she received the caliph's order. When she rose, she said, Pray tell the com-

mander of the faithful, that I shall always reckon it my glory to execute his majesty's commands, and that his slave will do her utmost to receive him with all the respect that is due to him. At the same time she ordered the slave her confidant to tell the black women appointed for that service to get the palace ready to receive the caliph, and dismissing the chief of the eunuchs, said to him, You see it requires some time to get all things ready, therefore I entreat you to curb his majesty's impatience, that, when he arrives, he may not find things out of order.

The chief of the eunuchs and his retinue being gone, Schemselnihar returned to the saloon, extremely concerned at the necessity she was under of sending back the prince of Persia sooner than she had intended. She came up to him again with tears in her eyes, which heightened Ebn Thaher's fear, who thought it no good omen. Madam, said the prince to her, I perceive you are come to tell me that we must part: if there be nothing more to dread, I hope Heaven will give me the patience which is necessary to support your absence. Alas! replied the too tender Schemselnihar, how happy do I think you, and how unhappy do I think myself, when I compare your lot with my sad destiny! No doubt you will suffer by my absence, but that is all, and you may comfort yourself with hopes of seeing me again; but as for me, just Heaven! what a terri-

ble trial am I brought to! I must not only be deprived of the sight of the only person whom I love, but I must be tormented with the presence of one whom you have made hateful to me. Will not the arrival of the caliph put me in mind of your departure? And how can I, when I am taken up with your dear image, express to that prince the joy which he always observed in my eyes whenever he came to see me? I shall have my mind perplexed when I speak to him, and the least complaisance which I shew to his love will stab me to the heart. Can I relish his kind words and caresses? Think, prince, to what torments I shall be exposed when I can see you no more. Her tears and sighs hindered her from going on, and the prince of Persia would have replied, but his own grief, and that of his mistress, deprived him of the power of speech.

Ebn Thaher, who only wished to get out of the palace, was obliged to comfort them, and to exhort them to have patience: but the trusty slave again interrupted them. Madam, said she to Schemselnihar, you have no time to lose; the eunuchs begin to arrive, and you know the caliph will be here immediately. O Heaven! how cruel is this separation! cried the favourite. Make haste, said she to the confidant, take them both to the gallery which looks into the garden on the one side, and to the

Tygris on the other; and when the night grows dark, let them out by the back gate, that they may retire with safety. Having spoken thus, she tenderly embraced the prince of Persia, without being able to say one word more, and went to meet the caliph in such disorder as cannot well be imagined.

In the mean time, the trusty slave conducted the prince and Ebn Thaher to the gallery, as Schemselnihar had appointed; and left them there, assuring them, as she closed the door upon them, that they had nothing to fear, and that she would come for them when it was time.

Here Scheherazade broke off, and next night pursued her narrative.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIRST NIGHT.

When Schemselnihar's trusty slave had left the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, they forgot she had assured them they had nothing to apprehend. They examined the gallery, and were seized with extreme fear, because they knew no means of escape, if the caliph or any of his officers should happen to come there.

A great light, which they suddenly beheld through the lattices on the garden side, caused them to approach them to see from whence it came. It was occasioned by a hundred flambeaux of white wax, carried by as many young eunuchs: these were followed by more than a hundred others, who guarded the ladies of the caliph's palace, clothed, and armed with cimeters, in the same manner as those I spoke of before; and the caliph came after them, betwixt Mesrour their captain on his right, and Vassif their second officer on his left hand.

Schemselnihar waited for the caliph at the entrance of a walk, accompanied by twenty women all of surprising beauty, adorned with necklaces and ear-rings of large diamonds; they played and sung on their instruments, and formed a charming concert. The favourite no sooner saw the prince ap-

pear, but she advanced and prostrated herself at his feet; and while she was doing this, Prince of Persia, said she, within herself, if your sad eyes witness what I do, judge of my hard lot; if I were humbling myself so before you, my heart would feel no reluctance.

The caliph was delighted to see Schemselnihar: Rise, madam, said he to her, come near, I am angry with myself that I should have deprived myself so long of the pleasure of seeing you. As he spoke, he took her by the hand, and, with many tender expressions, went and sat down upon the silver throne which Schemselnihar caused to be brought for him, and she sat down on a seat before him. The twenty women made a circle round them upon other seats, while the young eunuchs, who carried flambeaux, dispersed themselves at a certain distance from one another, that the caliph might the better enjoy the cool of the evening.

When the caliph had seated himself, he looked round him, and beheld with great satisfaction the garden illuminated with many other lights, besides those flambeaux which the young eunuchs held; but taking notice that the saloon was shut, expressed his surprise, and demanded the reason. It was done on purpose to surprise him; for he had no sooner spoken, than all the windows flew open at once, and he saw it illuminated within and without, in a much

better manner than ever he had beheld it before. Charming Schemselnihar, cried he, at this sight, I understand you; you would have me know there are as fine nights as days. After what I have seen, I cannot deny this.

Let us return to the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, whom we left in the gallery. Ebn Thaher could not enough admire all that he saw: I am not young, said he, and I have seen great entertainments in my time; but I do not think any thing can be seen so surprising and magnificent! All that is said of enchanted palaces does not come up to the prodigious spectacle we now behold. What riches and magnificence united!

The prince of Persia was not at all interested by the objects which so delighted Ebn Thaher; he could look on nothing but Schemselnihar, and the presence of the caliph threw him into inconceivable grief. Dear Ebn Thaher, he exclaimed, would to God I had my mind as much at liberty to attend to those objects of admiration as you! But alas! I am in a quite different situation, all these things serve only to increase my torment. Can I see the caliph familiar with the object of my love, and not die of grief? Must so ardent a passion as mine be disturbed with so potent a rival? O heavens! How cruel and strange is my destiny! It is but a moment since I esteemed myself the most fortunate lover in

the world, and at this instant I feel a death stroke to my heart. I cannot resist it, my dear Ebn Thaher; my patience is exhausted, my disorder overwhelms me, and my courage fails. While he was speaking, he saw something pass in the garden, which obliged him to be silent and to turn all his attention that way.

The caliph had ordered one of the women, who was near him, to play upon her lute, and she began to sing. The words she sung were very passionate, and the caliph, persuaded that she sung thus by order of Schemselnihar, who had frequently entertained him with the like testimonies of her affection, interpreted them in his own favour. But this was not now Schemselnihar's meaning; she applied them to her dear Ali Ebn Becar, and was so sensibly touched with grief, to have before her an object whose presence she could no longer enjoy, that she fainted and fell backwards upon her seat, which having no arms to support her, she must have fallen, had not some of the women given her timely assistance, taken her up, and carried her into the saloon.

Ebn Thaher, who was in the gallery, being surprised at this accident, turned towards the prince of Persia; but instead of finding him standing, and looking through the window as before, he was extremely amazed to discover him lying at his feet motionless. This convinced him of the violence of

the prince's passion for Schemselnihar, and he admired that strange effect of sympathy, which put him into a mortal fear on account of the place they were in. He did all he could to recover the prince, but in vain. Ebn Thaher was in this perplexity, when Schemselnihar's confidant opened the gallery door, and entered out of breath, as one who knew not where she was. Come speedily, cried she, that I may let you out; all is in confusion here; and I fear this will be the last of our days. Alas! how would you have us go? replied Ebn Thaher, with a mournful voice; approach, and see what a condition the prince of Persia is in. When the slave saw him in a swoon, she ran for water, and returned in an instant.

At last the prince of Persia, after they had thrown water on his face, recovered. Prince, said Ebn Thaher to him, we run the risk of perishing if we stay here any longer; exert yourself, therefore, let us endeavour to save our lives. He was so feeble, that he could not rise alone; Ebn Thaher and the confidant lent him their hands, and supported him on each side. They reached a little iron gate which opened towards the Tygris, went out at it, and came to the side of a little canal which communicated with the river. The confidant clapped her hands, and immediately a little boat appeared, and came towards them with one rower. Ali Ebn Becar

and his comrade went aboard, and the confidant remained at the side of the canal. As soon as the prince was seated in the boat, he stretched out one hand towards the palace, and laying the other on his heart, exclaimed with a feeble voice, Dear object of my soul, receive my faith with this hand, while I assure you with the other, that my heart shall for ever preserve the fire with which it burns for you.

Here Scheherazade perceiving day, held her peace, but next night resumed her story.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SECOND NIGHT.

In the mean time the boatman rowed with all his might, and Schemselnihar's confidant accompanied the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher walking along the side of the canal, until they came to the Tygris, and when she could go no farther, she took leave of them and returned.

The prince of Persia continued very feeble. Ebn Thaher comforted him, and exhorted him to take courage. Consider, said he, that when we are landed, we have a great way to walk before we reach my house, and I would not advise you to go to your palace, which is a great deal farther, at this hour and in this condition. At last they went out of the boat, but the prince had so little strength that he could not walk, which put Ebn Thaher into great perplexity. He recollected he had a friend in the neighbourhood, and carried the prince thither with great difficulty. His friend received him very cheerfully, and when he had made them sit down, he asked them where they had been so late. Ebn Thaher answered, I heard this evening that a man who owed me a considerable sum of money was setting out on a long voyage. I lost no time to find him, and by the way I met with this young nobleman, to whom

I am under a thousand obligations; for knowing my debtor, he did me the favour to go along with me. We had a great deal of trouble to bring the man to reason. We have at length succeeded, and that is the cause of our being so late. In our return home, this good lord, to whom I am for ever bound to shew all possible respect, was attacked by a sudden illness, which made me take the liberty to knock at your door, flattering myself that you would be pleased to lodge us this night.

Ebn Thaher's friend took all this for truth, told them they were welcome, and offered the prince of Persia, whom he knew not, all the assistance he could desire; but Ebn Thaher spoke for the prince, and said, That his distemper was of such a nature as to require nothing but rest. His friend understood by this that they desired to go to bed. Upon which he conducted them to an apartment, where he left them.

Though the prince of Persia slept, he was interrupted by troublesome dreams, which represented Schemselnihar in a swoon at the caliph's feet, and increased his affliction. Ebn Thaher was very impatient to be at home, and doubted not but his family was under great apprehension, because he never used to sleep out. He arose and departed early in the morning, after he had taken leave of his friend, who rose at break of day to prayers. At last

he reached his house, and the first thing the prince of Persia did, who had walked so far with much trouble, was to lie down upon a sofa, as weary as if he had been a long journey. Not being in a state to go to his own palace, Ebn Thaher ordered a chamber to be prepared for him, and sent to acquaint his friends with his condition, and where he was. In the mean time he begged him to compose himself, to command in his house, and to dispose of all things as he pleased. I thank you heartily for your obliging offers, said the prince; but that I may not be any ways troublesome to you, I conjure you to deal with me as if I were not at your house. I would not stay one moment, if I thought my presence would incommode you in the least.

As soon as Ebn Thaher had time to recollect himself, he told his family all that had passed at Schemselnihar's palace, and concluded by thanking God, who had delivered him from the danger he had been in. The prince of Persia's principal domestics came to receive his orders at Ebn Thaher's house, and in a little time there arrived several of his friends, who had notice of his indisposition. Those friends passed the greatest part of the day with him; and though their conversation could not extinguish those melancholy ideas which were the cause of his trouble, yet it afforded him some relief. He would have taken his leave of Ebn Thaher towards the evening;

but this faithful friend found him still so weak, that he obliged him to stay till next day, and in the mean time, to divert him, gave a concert of vocal and instrumental music in the evening; but this concert served only to remind him of the preceding night, and renewed his trouble, instead of assuaging it; so that next day his distemper seemed to increase. Upon this Ebn Thaher did not oppose his going home, but took care to accompany him; and when he was with him alone in his chamber, he represented to him all those arguments which might influence him to a generous effort to overcome his passion, which in the end would neither prove fortunate to himself nor to the favourite. Ah! dear Ebn Thaher, exclaimed the prince, how easy is it for you to give this advice, but how hard for me to follow it! I am sensible of its importance, but am not able to profit by it. I have said already, that I shall carry to the grave the love I bear to Schemselnihar. When Ebn Thaher saw that he could gain nothing upon the prince, he took his leave, and would have retired.

Scheherazade seeing day begin to appear, ceased, and next morning resumed her discourse.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-THIRD NIGHT.

THE prince of Persia interrupted him, and said, Kind Ebn Thaher, since I have declared to you that it is not in my power to follow your wise counsels, I beg you would not charge it on me as a crime, nor forbear to give me the usual testimonies of your friendship. You cannot do me a greater favour than to inform me of the destiny of my dear Schemselnihar, when you hear of her. The uncertainty I am in concerning her fate, and the apprehensions her fainting have occasioned in me, keep me in this languishing condition you reproach me with. My lord, answered Ebn Thaher, you have reason to hope that her fainting was not attended with any bad consequences: her confidant will quickly come and inform me of the issue; and as soon as I know the particulars, I will not fail to impart them.

Ebn Thaher left the prince in this hope, and returned home, where he expected Schemselnihar's confidant all the rest of the day, but in vain, nor did she come on the following. His uneasiness to know the state of the prince of Persia's health would not suffer him to wait any longer without seeing him. He went to his palace to exhort him to patience, and found him lying on his bed as ill as ever, sur-

rounded by a great many of his friends, and several physicians, who used all their art to discover the cause of his disorder. As soon as he saw Ebn Thaher, he looked at him with a smile, to signify that he had two things to tell him; the one, that he was glad to see him; the other, how much the physicians, who could not discover the cause of his illness, were out in their reasonings.

His friends and physicians retired one after another, so that Ebn Thaher being alone with him, approached his bed to ask him how he had been since he had last seen him. I must tell you, answered the prince, that my passion, which continually gathers new strength, and the uncertainty of the lovely Schemselnihar's fate, augment my disorder every moment, and cast me into such a state as afflicts my kindred and friends, and breaks the measures of my physicians, who do not understand it. You cannot think, he added, how much I suffer by seeing so many people about me, who importune me, and whom I cannot in civility put away. Your company alone relieves me; but I conjure you not to dissemble with me: what news do you bring of Schemselnihar? Have you seen her confidant? What says she to you? Ebn Thaher answered, that he had not seen her yet. No sooner had he communicated to the prince of Persia this sad intelligence, than the tears came into his eyes; he could not an-

swer one word, his heart was so oppressed. Prince, added Ebn Thaher, suffer me to tell you, that you are too ingenious in tormenting yourself. In the name of God, wipe away your tears: if any of your people should come in, they would discover you by this, notwithstanding the care you ought to take to conceal your thoughts. Whatever his judicious adviser could say, it was not possible for the prince to refrain from weeping. Wise Ebn Thaher, said he, when he had recovered his speech, I may indeed hinder my tongue from revealing the secrets of my heart, but I have no power over my tears, upon such an alarming subject as Schemselnihar's danger. If that adorable and only object of my desires be no longer in the world, I shall not survive her a moment. Reject so afflicting a thought, replied Ebn Thaher; Schemselnihar is yet alive, you need not doubt it: if you have heard no news of her, it is because she could find no opportunity to send to you, and I hope you will hear from her to-day. To this he added several other consoling arguments, and then withdrew.

Ebn Thaher had scarcely reached his own house, when Schemselnihar's confidant arrived with a melancholy countenance, which he reckoned a bad omen. He asked news of her mistress? Tell me yours first, said the confidant, for I was in great trouble to see the prince of Persia go away in that

condition. Ebn Thaher told her all that she wished to know, and when he had done, the slave began thus: If the prince of Persia has suffered, and does still suffer for my mistress, she suffers no less for him. After I departed from you, I returned to the saloon, where I found Schemselnihar not yet recovered from her swoon, notwithstanding all the assistance they endeavoured to give her. The caliph was sitting near her with all the signs of real grief. He asked all the women, and me in particular, if we knew the cause of her disorder; but we kept all secret, and told him we were altogether ignorant of it. In the mean time we all wept to see her suffer so long, and forgot nothing that might any ways relieve her. In a word, it was almost midnight before she came to herself. The caliph, who had the patience to wait the event, was rejoiced at her recovery, and asked Schemselnihar the cause of her illness. As soon as she heard him speak, she endeavoured to recover her seat; and after she had kissed his feet, before he could hinder her, Sir, said she, I have reason to complain of heaven, that it did not allow me to expire at your majesty's feet, to testify thereby how sensible I am of your favours.

I am persuaded you love me, replied the caliph, and I command you to preserve yourself for my sake. You have probably exceeded in something to-day, which has occasioned this indisposition; take

care, I intreat you; abstain from it for the future. I am glad to see you better, and advise you to stay here to-night, and not return to your chamber, for fear the motion should affect you. He then commanded a little wine to be brought to strengthen her; and taking leave of her, returned to his apartment.

As soon as the caliph had departed, my mistress gave me a sign to come near her. She asked me earnestly concerning you: I assured her that you had been gone a long time, which made her easy on that head. I took care not to speak of the prince of Persia's fainting, lest she should fall into the same state, from which we had so much trouble to recover her; but my precautions were in vain, as you shall hear. Prince, exclaimed she, I henceforth renounce all pleasure as long as I am deprived of the sight of you. If I have understood your heart right, I only follow your example. You will not cease to weep and mourn until I see you. At these words, which she uttered in a manner expressive of the violence of her passion, she fainted a second time in my arms.

Here Scheherazade, seeing day begin to appear, broke off, and next night pursued her narrative.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FOURTH NIGHT.

SCHEMSELNIHAR'S confidant continued to relate to Ebn Thaher all that had happened to her mistress after the first fainting. My companions and I, said she, were a long time recovering her; at last she came to herself; and then I said to her, Madam, are you resolved to kill yourself, and to make us also die with you? I intreat you, in the name of the prince of Persia, who is so deeply interested in your life, to preserve it. I am much obliged to you, replied she, for your care, your zeal, and your advice; but alas! they are useless to me: you are not to flatter us with any hopes, for we can expect no end of our torment but in the grave.

One of my companions would have diverted these sad thoughts by playing on the lute, but she commanded her to be silent, and ordered all of them to retire, except me, whom she kept all night with her. O heavens! what a night it was! she passed it in tears and groans, and incessantly naming the prince of Persia. She lamented her lot, that had destined her to the caliph, whom she could not love, and not for him whom she loved so dearly.

Next morning, as she was not commodiously lodged in the saloon, I helped her to her chamber,

which she had no sooner reached, than all the physicians of the palace came to see her, by order of the caliph, who was not long before he arrived himself. The medicines which the physicians prescribed to Schemselnihar were ineffectual, because they were ignorant of the cause of her malady, which was augmented by the presence of the caliph. She got a little rest however this night, and as soon as she awoke, she charged me to come to you, to learn some news of the prince of Persia. I have already informed you of his case, said Ebn Thaher; so return to your mistress, and assure her, that the prince of Persia waits for some account of her with an impatience equal to her own. Above all, exhort her to moderation, and to overcome her feelings, for fear she should drop before the caliph some word, which may prove fatal to us all. As for me, replied the confidant, I confess I dread her transports. I have taken the liberty to tell her my mind, and am persuaded that she will not take it ill that I tell her this from you.

Ebn Thaher, who had but just come from the prince of Persia's lodgings, thought it not convenient to return so soon, and neglect his own important affairs; he therefore went not till the evening. The prince was alone, and no better than in the morning. Ebn Thaher, said he to him, as soon as he saw him, you have doubtless many friends, but they

do not know your worth, which you discover to me by your zeal, your care, and the trouble you give yourself to oblige me. I am confounded with all that you do for me with so much affection, and I know not how I shall be able to express my gratitude. Prince, answered Ebn Thaher, do not speak thus, I entreat you. I am ready, not only to give one of my eyes to save one of yours, but to sacrifice my life for you. But this is not the present business. I come to tell you that Schemselnihar sent her confidant to ask me about you, and at the same time to inform me of her condition. You may assure yourself that I said nothing but what might confirm the excess of your passion for her mistress, and the constancy with which you love her. Then Ebn Thaher gave him a particular account of all that had passed betwixt the trusty slave and him. The prince listened with all the different emotions of fear, jealousy, affection, and compassion, which this conversation could inspire, making, upon every thing which he heard, all the afflicting or comforting reflections that so passionate a lover was capable of.

Their conversation continued so long that the night was far advanced, so that the prince of Persia obliged Ebn Thaher to stay with him. The next morning, as this trusty friend returned home, there came a woman to him whom he knew to be Schemselnihar's confidant, and immediately she spoke to

him thus: My mistress salutes you, and I am come to intreat you in her name to deliver this letter to the prince of Persia. The zealous Ebn Thaher took the letter, and returned to the prince, accompanied by the confidant slave.

Scheherazade stopped here because day began to appear, and resumed her relation to the sultan of the Indies the night following.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-FIFTH NIGHT.

When Ebn Thaher entered the prince of Persia's house with Schemselnihar's confidant, he prayed her to stay, and wait for him a moment in the ante-room. As soon as the prince saw him, he asked earnestly what news he had to communicate? The best you can expect, answered Ebn Thaher: you are as dearly beloved as you love; Schemselnihar's confidant is in your ante-room; she has brought you a letter from her mistress, and waits for your orders to come in. Let her enter, cried the prince, with a transport of joy; and so saying, sat up to receive her.

The prince's attendants retired as soon as they saw Ebn Thaher, and left him alone with their master. Ebn Thaher opened the door himself, and brought in the confidant. The prince knew her, and received her with great politeness. My lord, said she to him, I am sensible of the affliction you have endured since I had the honour to conduct you to the boat which waited to bring you back; but I hope the letter I have brought will contribute to your cure. So saying, she presented him the letter. He took it, and after he had kissed it several times, opened it, and read as follows:

A LETTER FROM SCHEMSELNIHAR TO THE PRINCE OF PERSIA.

"The person who will deliver to you this letter will give you more correct information concerning me than I can, for I have not been myself since I saw you. Deprived of your presence, I endeavour to deceive myself by conversing with you by these ill-written lines, with the same pleasure as if I had the happiness of speaking to you in person.

"It is said that patience is a cure for all evils, but instead of relieving it heightens my sufferings. Although your picture be deeply engraven in my heart, my eyes desire to have the original continually before them; and they will lose all their light, if they be any considerable time deprived of this felicity. May I flatter myself that yours have the same impatience to see me? Yes, I can; their tender glances have sufficiently assured me of this. How happy, prince, would it be for you, how happy for Schemselnihar, if our united desires were not thwarted by invincible obstacles; obstacles which afflict me the more sensibly as they affect you.

"These thoughts which my fingers write, and which I express with incredible pleasure, repeating them again and again, proceed from the bottom of my heart, and from the incurable wound which you

have made in it; a wound which I bless a thousand times, notwithstanding the cruel torments I endure for your absence. I would reckon all that opposes our love nothing, were I only allowed to see you sometimes with freedom; I should then enjoy your company, and what could I desire more?

"Do not imagine that I say more than I think. Alas! whatever expressions I use, I feel that I think more than I can tell you. My eyes, which are continually watching and weeping for your return; my afflicted heart, which desires you alone; the sighs that escape me as often as I think on you, and that is every moment; my imagination, which represents no other object to me than my dear prince; the complaints that I make to heaven for the rigour of my destiny; in a word, my grief, my distress, my torments, which have allowed me no ease since I was deprived of your presence, will vouch for what I write.

"Am not I unhappy to be born to love, without hope of enjoying the object of my passion? This afflicting thought oppresses me so that I should die, were I not persuaded that you love me: but this sweet comfort balances my despair, and preserves my life. Tell me that you love me always. I will keep your letter carefully, and read it a thousand times a-day: I shall endure my afflictions with less impatience: I pray heaven may cease to be angry at

us, and grant us an opportunity to say that we love one another without fear; and that we shall never cease thus to love. Adieu. I salute Ebn Thaher, to whom we are so much obliged."

The prince of Persia was not satisfied with reading the letter once; he thought he had perused it with too little attention, and therefore read it again with more leisure; and while so doing, sometimes heaved deep sighs, sometimes shed tears, and sometimes broke out into transports of joy and tenderness as the contents affected him. In short, he could not keep his eyes off those characters drawn by so beloved a hand, and was beginning to read it a third time, when Ebn Thaher observed to him that the confidant had no time to lose, and that he ought to think of giving an answer. Alas! cried the prince, how would you have me reply to so kind a letter! In what terms shall I express myself in my present disturbed state! My mind is tossed with a thousand tormenting thoughts, which are lost the moment they are conceived, to make way for others. So long as my body is influenced by the impressions of my mind, how shall I be able to hold the paper, or guide a reed to write*?

* The Arabians, Persians, and Turks, when they write, hold the paper commonly upon their knee with their left hand, and write with their right, with a little reed or cane, cut and slit like our pens; this cane is hollow, and resembles our reeds, but is harder.

So saying, he took out of a little desk which was near him, paper, a cane ready cut, and an inkhorn.

Scheherazade perceiving day, broke off, and began her story again next day as follows.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIXTH NIGHT.

THE prince of Persia, before he began to write, gave Schemselnihar's letter to Ebn Thaher, and prayed him to hold it open while he wrote, that by casting his eyes upon it he might the better see what to answer. He began to write; but the tears that fell from his eyes upon the paper obliged him several times to stop, that they might fall the more freely. At last he finished his letter, and giving it to Ebn Thaher, Read it, I pray, said he, and do me the favour to see if the disorder of my mind has allowed me to give a favourable answer. Ebn Thaher took it, and read as follows:

THE PRINCE OF PERSIA'S ANSWER TO SCHEMSELNIHAR'S LETTER.

"I was plunged in the deepest grief when I received your letter, but at the sight of it I was transported with unspeakable joy. When I beheld the characters written by your fair hand, my eyes were enlightened by a stronger light than they lost, when yours were suddenly closed at the feet of my rival. The words contained in your kind epistle are so many rays which have dispelled the darkness where-

with my soul was obscured; they shew me how much you suffer from your love of me, and that you are not ignorant of what I endure on your account. Thus they comfort me in my afflictions. On the one hand they cause me to shed tears in abundance; and on the other, inflame my heart with a fire which supports it, and prevents my dying of grief. I have not had one moment's rest since our cruel separation. Your letter alone gave me some ease. I kept a mournful silence till the moment I received it, and then recovered my speech. I was buried in profound melancholy, but it inspired me with joy, which immediately appeared in my eyes and countenance. But my surprise at receiving a favour which I had not yet deserved was so great, that I knew not how to begin to testify my thankfulness. In a word, after having kissed it several times, as a precious pledge of your goodness, I read it over and over, and was confounded at the excess of my good fortune. You would have me declare that I always love you. Ah! did I not love you so perfectly as I do, I could not forbear adoring you, after all the marks you have given me of an affection so uncommon: yes, I love you, my dear soul, and shall account it my glory to burn all my days with that sweet fire you have kindled in my heart. I will never complain of that ardour with which I feel it consumes me: and how rigorous soever the evils I suffer, I will bear them

with fortitude, in hopes some time or other to see you. Would to heaven it were to-day, and that, instead of sending you my letter, I might be allowed to come and assure you in person, that I die for you! My tears hinder me from saying more. Adieu."

Ebn Thaher could not read these last lines without weeping. He returned the letter to the prince of Persia, and assured him it wanted no correction. The prince closed it, and when he had sealed it, he desired the trusty slave to come near, and said to her, This is my answer to your dear mistress's letter. I conjure you to carry it to her, and to salute her in my name. The slave took the letter, and retired with Ebn Thaher.

Here the sultaness stopped, and continued her story next night in the following manner.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-SEVENTH NIGHT.

After Ebn Thaher had walked some way with the slave, he left her, and went to his house, and began to think in earnest upon the amorous intrigue in which he found himself unhappily engaged. He considered, that the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, notwithstanding their interest to conceal their correspondence, conducted themselves with so little discretion, that it could not be long a secret. He drew all the consequences from it, which a man of good sense might have anticipated. Were Schemselnihar, said he to himself, a lady of common rank, I would contribute all in my power to make her and her lover happy; but she is the caliph's favourite, and no man can without danger attempt to engage the affections of the object of his choice. His anger would fall in the first instance on Schemselnihar; it will next cost the prince of Persia his life, and I should be involved in his misfortune. In the mean time I have my honour, my quiet, my family, and my property to preserve. I must, while I can, extricate myself out of such a perilous situation.

These thoughts occupied his mind all that day. Next morning he went to the prince of Persia, with a design of making one more effort to induce him to

conquer his passion. He represented to him what he had before urged in vain; that it would be much better for him to summon all his resolution, to overcome his inclination for Schemselnihar, than to suffer himself to be hurried away by it; and that his passion was so much the more dangerous, as his rival was powerful. In short, sir, added he, if you will hearken to me, you ought to think of nothing but to triumph over your love; otherwise you run the risk of destroying yourself with Schemselnihar, whose life ought to be dearer to you than your own. I give you this advice as a friend, for which you will some time or other thank me.

The prince heard Ebn Thaher with great impatience, but suffered him to speak his mind, and then replied to him thus: Ebn Thaher, do you think I can cease to love Schemselnihar, who loves me so tenderly? She is not afraid to expose her life for me, and would you have me regard mine? No; whatever misfortunes befall me, I will love Schemselnihar to my last breath.

Ebn Thaher, shocked at the obstinacy of the prince of Persia, left him hastily, and going to his own house, recalled his former reflections, and began to think seriously what he should do. In the mean time a jeweller, one of his intimate friends, came to see him. The jeweller had perceived that Schemselnihar's confidant came oftener to Ebn Thaher

than usual, and that he was constantly with the prince of Persia, whose sickness was known to every one, though not the cause. This had awakened the jeweller's suspicions, and finding Ebn Thaher very pensive, he presently judged that he was perplexed with some important affair, and fancying that he knew the cause, he asked what Schemselnihar's confidant wanted with him? Ebn Thaher being struck with this question, would have dissembled, and told him, that it was on some trifling errand she came so frequently to him. You do not tell me the truth, said the jeweller, and your dissimulation only serves to prove to me that this trifle is a more important affair than at first I thought it to be.

Ebn Thaher, perceiving that his friend pressed him so much, said to him, It is true, that it is an affair of the greatest consequence. I had resolved to keep it secret, but since I know how much you are my friend, I choose rather to make you my confidant, than to suffer you to be under a mistake about it. I do not bind you to secrecy, for you will easily judge by what I am going to tell you how impossible it is to keep it unknown. After this preamble, he told him the amour between Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia. You know, he continued, in what esteem I am at court, in the city, and with lords and ladies of the greatest quality; what a disgrace would it be for me, should this rash amour

come to be discovered? But what do I say; should not I and my family be completely ruined? That is what perplexes my mind; but I have just formed my resolution: I will go immediately and satisfy my creditors, and recover my debts, and when I have secured my property, will retire to Bussorah, and stay till the storm, that I foresee, is blown over. My friendship for Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia makes me very sensible to what dangers they are exposed. I pray heaven to convince them of their peril, and to preserve them; but if their evil destiny should bring their attachment to the knowledge of the caliph, I shall, at least, be out of the reach of his resentment; for I do not think them so wicked as to design to involve me in their misfortunes. It would be the height of ingratitude, and a bad reward for the service I have done them, and the good advice I have given, particularly to the prince of Persia, who may save both himself and his mistress from this precipice. He may as easily leave Bagdad as I; and absence will insensibly disengage him from a passion, which will only increase whilst he continues in this place.

The jeweller was extremely surprised at what Ebn Thaher told him. What you say, said he, is of so much importance, that I cannot understand how Schemselnihar and the prince could have abandoned themselves to such a violent passion. What inclina-

tion soever they may have for one another, instead of yielding to it, they ought to resist it, and make a better use of their reason. Is it possible they can be insensible of the danger of their correspondence? How deplorable is their blindness! I anticipate all its consequences as well as yourself; but you are wise and prudent, and I approve your resolution; as it is the only way to deliver yourself from the fatal events which you have reason to fear. After this conversation the jeweller rose, and took his leave of Ebn Thaher.

The sultaness stopped here, and continued the story next night as follows.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-EIGHTH NIGHT.

BEFORE the jeweller retired, Ebn Thaher conjured him by the friendship betwixt them, to say nothing of what he had heard. Fear not, replied the jeweller, I will keep this secret at the peril of my life.

Two days after, the jeweller went to Ebn Thaher's shop, and seeing it shut, he doubted not but he had executed his design; but, to be more sure, he asked a neighbour, if he knew why it was not opened? The neighbour answered that he knew not, unless Ebn Thaher was gone a journey. There was no need of his enquiring farther, and he immediately thought of the prince of Persia: Unhappy prince, said he to himself, what will be your grief when you hear this news? How will you now carry on your correspondence with Schemselnihar? I fear you will die of despair. I pity you, and must repair your loss of a too timid confidant.

The business that obliged him to come abroad was of no consequence, so that he neglected it, and though he had no knowledge of the prince of Persia, only by having sold him some jewels, he went to his house. He addressed himself to one of his servants, and desired him to tell his master, that he wished to speak with him about business of very great import-

ance. The servant returned immediately to the jeweller, and introduced him to the prince's chamber. He was leaning on a sofa, with his head on a cushion. As soon as the prince saw him, he rose up to receive and welcome him, and intreated him to sit down; asked him if he could serve him in any thing, or if he came to tell him any thing interesting concerning himself. Prince, answered the jeweller, though I have not the honour to be particularly acquainted with you, yet the desire of testifying my zeal has made me take the liberty to come to your house, to impart to you a piece of news that concerns you. I hope you will pardon my boldness for my good intention.

After this introduction, the jeweller entered upon the matter, and continued: Prince, I shall have the honour to tell you, that it is a long time since conformity of disposition, and some business we have had together, united Ebn Thaher and myself in strict friendship. I know you are acquainted with him, and that he has employed himself in obliging you to his utmost. I have learnt this from himself, for he keeps nothing secret from me, nor I from him. I went just now to his shop, and was surprised to find it shut. I addressed myself to one of his neighbours, to ask the reason; he answered me, that two days ago Ebn Thaher took leave of him, and other neighbours, offering them his service at Bussorah, whither

he is gone, said he, about an affair of great importance. Not being satisfied with this answer, my concern for his welfare determined me to come and ask if you knew any thing particular concerning this his sudden departure.

At this discourse, which the jeweller accommodated to the subject, the better to compass his design, the prince of Persia changed colour, and looked at the jeweller in a manner which convinced him how much he was disconcerted at the intelligence. I am surprised at what you inform me, said he; a greater misfortune could not befall me: Ah! he continued, with tears in his eyes, if what you tell me be true, I am undone! Has Ebn Thaher, who was all my comfort, in whom I put all my confidence, left me? I cannot think of living after so cruel a blow.

The jeweller needed no more to convince him fully of the prince of Persia's violent passion, which Ebn Thaher had told him of: mere friendship would not make him speak so; nothing but love could produce such lively sensations.

The prince continued some moments absorbed in melancholy thoughts; at last he lifted up his head, and calling one of his servants, said, Go to Ebn Thaher's house, and ask some of his domestics if he be gone to Bussorah: run, and come back quickly with the answer. While the servant was

gone, the jeweller endeavoured to entertain the prince of Persia with indifferent subjects; but the prince gave little heed to him. He was a prey to fatal grief: sometimes he could not persuade himself that Ebn Thaher was gone, and at others he did not doubt of it, when he reflected upon the conversation he had had with him the last time he had seen him, and the abrupt manner in which he had left him.

At last the prince's servant returned, and reported that he had spoken with one of Ebn Thaher's servants, who assured him that he had been gone two days to Bussorah. As I came from Ebn Thaher's house, added the servant, a slave well dressed met me, and after she had asked me if I had the honour to belong to you, told me she wanted to speak with you, and begged at the same time that she might accompany me: she is in the outer room, and I believe has a letter to deliver to you from some person of consequence. The prince commanded her to be immediately introduced, not doubting but it was Schemselnihar's confidant slave, as indeed it was. The jeweller knew her, having seen her several times at Ebn Thaher's house: she could not have come at a better time to save the prince from despair. She saluted him.——But, said Scheherazade, by this time I perceive it is day. She discontinued, and next night went on after this manner.

THE HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINTH NIGHT.

THE prince of Persia returned the salute of Schemselnihar's confidant. The jeweller arose as soon as he saw her and retired, to leave them at liberty to converse together. The confidant, after she had spoken some time with the prince, took her leave and departed. She left him quite another person from what he was before; his eyes appeared brighter, and his countenance more gay, which satisfied the jeweller that the good slave came to tell him something favourable to his amour.

The jeweller having taken his place again near the prince, said to him smiling, I see, prince, you have business of importance at the caliph's palace. The prince of Persia, astonished and alarmed at these words, answered the jeweller, What leads you to suppose that I have business at the caliph's palace? I judge so, replied the jeweller, by the slave who has just left you. And to whom, think you, belongs this slave? demanded the prince. To Schemselnihar the caliph's favourite, answered the jeweller: I know, continued he, both the slave and her mistress, who has several times done me the honour to come to my house, and buy jewels. Besides, I know that Schemselnihar keeps nothing secret from this slave;

and I have seen her pass backwards and forwards for several days along the streets, as I thought very much troubled; I imagined that it was for some affair of consequence concerning her mistress.

The jeweller's words greatly troubled the prince of Persia. He would not say so, said he to himself, if he did not suspect, or rather were not acquainted with my secret. He remained silent for some time, not knowing what course to take. At last he began, and said to the jeweller, You have told me things which make me believe that you know yet more than you have acquainted me with; it concerns my repose that I be perfectly informed; I conjure you therefore not to conceal any thing from me.

Then the jeweller, who desired nothing more, gave him a particular account of what had passed betwixt Ebn Thaher and himself. He informed him that he was apprised of his correspondence with Schemselnihar, and forgot not to tell him that Ebn Thaher, alarmed at the danger of being his confidant in the matter, had communicated to him his intention of retiring to Bussorah, until the storm which he dreaded should be blown over. This he has executed, added the jeweller, and I am surprised how he could determine to abandon you, in the condition he informed me you were in. As for me, prince, I confess, I am moved with compassion towards you, and am come to offer you my service. If

you do me the favour to accept of it, I engage myself to be as faithful to you as Ebn Thaher; besides, I promise to be more resolute. I am ready to sacrifice my honour and life for you: and, that you may not doubt of my sincerity, I swear by all that is sacred in our religion, to keep your secret inviolable. Be persuaded then, prince, that you will find in me the friend whom you have lost. This declaration encouraged the prince, and comforted him under Ebn Thaher's absence. I am glad, said he to the jeweller, to find in you a reparation of my loss; I want words to express the obligations I am under to you. I pray God to recompense your generosity, and I accept your obliging offer with all my heart. Believe me, continued he, Schemselnihar's confidant came to speak to me concerning you. She told me that it was you who advised Ebn Thaher to go from Bagdad; these were the last words she spoke to me, as she went away, and she seemed persuaded of what she said; but they do not do you justice. I doubt not, after what you have told me, she is deceived. Prince, replied the jeweller, I have had the honour to give you a faithful account of my conversation with Ebn Thaher. It is true, when he told me he meant to retire to Bussorah, I did not oppose his design; but let not this prevent your putting confidence in me. I am ready to serve you with all imaginable zeal. If you do not use my service, this shall not

hinder me from keeping your secret religiously, according to my oath. I have already told you, replied the prince, that I did not believe what the confidant said: it is her zeal which inspired her with this groundless suspicion, and you ought to excuse it, as I do.

They continued their conversation for some time, and consulted together about the most convenient means to keep up the prince's correspondence with Schemselnihar. They agreed to begin by undeceiving the confidant, who was so unjustly prepossessed against the jeweller. The prince engaged to remove her mistake the first time he saw her again, and to intreat her to address herself to the jeweller whenever she might bring letters, or any other information from her mistress to him. In short, they determined, that she ought not to come so frequently to the prince's house, because thereby she might lead to the discovery of what it was of so great importance to conceal. At last the jeweller arose, and, after having again intreated the prince of Persia to place an unreserved confidence in him, withdrew.

The sultaness Scheherazade seeing day begin to appear, broke off, and next night resumed her narrative.

THE TWO HUNDREDTH NIGHT.

THE jeweller returning to his house perceived before him a letter, which somebody had dropped in the street. He took it up, and as it was not sealed, he opened it, and read as follows:

A LETTER FROM SCHEMSELNIHAR TO THE PRINCE OF PERSIA.

"I have received from my confidant intelligence which gives me no less concern than it must give you. In Ebn Thaher, we have indeed sustained a great loss; but let not this hinder you, dear prince, from thinking of your own preservation. If our friend has abandoned us through fear, let us consider that it is a misfortune which we could not avoid. I confess Ebn Thaher has left us at a time when we most needed his assistance; but let us bear this unexpected stroke with patience, and let us not forbear to love one another constantly. Fortify your heart under this misfortune. The object of our wishes is not to be obtained without trouble. Let us not be discouraged, but hope that heaven will favour us, and that, after so many afflictions, we shall see a happy accomplishment of our desires. Adieu."

While the jeweller was conversing with the prince

of Persia, the confidant had time to return to the palace and communicate to her mistress the ill news of Ebn Thaher's departure. Schemselnihar immediately wrote this letter, and sent back her confidant with it to the prince of Persia, but she negligently dropped it on her way.

The jeweller was glad to find it, for it furnished him with an opportunity of justifying himself to the confidant, and bringing her to the point he desired. When he had read it, he perceived the slave seeking for it with the greatest anxiety. He closed it again quickly, and put it into his bosom; but the slave observed him, and running to him, said, Sir, I have dropped a letter, which you had just now in your hand; I beseech you to restore it. The jeweller, pretending not to hear her, continued his way till he came to his house. He left his door open, that the confidant, who followed him, might enter after him. She followed him in, and when she came to his apartment, said, Sir, you can make no use of that letter you have found, and you would not hesitate to return it to me, if you knew from whom it came, and to whom it is directed. Besides, allow me to tell you, you cannot honestly keep it.

Before the jeweller returned her any answer, he made her sit down, and then said to her, Is not this letter from Schemselnihar, and is it not directed to the prince of Persia? The slave, who expected no

such question, blushed. The question embarrasses you, continued he; but I assure you I do not put it rashly: I could have given you the letter in the street, but I wished you to follow me, on purpose that I might come to some explanation with you. Is it just, tell me, to impute a misfortune to persons who have no ways contributed towards it? Yet this you have done, in telling the prince of Persia that it was I who advised Ebn Thaher to leave Bagdad for his own safety. I do not intend to waste time in justifying myself; it is enough that the prince of Persia is fully persuaded of my innocence; I will only tell you, that instead of contributing to Ebn Thaher's departure, I have been extremely afflicted at it, not so much from my friendship to him, as out of compassion for the condition in which he left the prince of Persia, whose correspondence with Schemselnihar he has discovered to me. As soon as I knew certainly that Ebn Thaher was gone from Bagdad, I went and presented myself to the prince, in whose house you found me, to inform him of this event, and to offer to undertake the service in which he had been employed; and provided you put the same confidence in me, that you did in Ebn Thaher, it will be your own fault if you do not make my assistance of use to you. Inform your mistress of what I have told you, and assure her, that though I should die for engaging in so dangerous an intrigue, I should

not repent of having sacrificed myself for two lovers so worthy of one another.

The confidant, after having heard the jeweller with great satisfaction, begged him to pardon the ill opinion she had conceived of him, for the zeal she had for her mistress's interest. I am beyond measure glad, she added, that Schemselnihar and the prince have found in you a person so fit to supply Ebn Thaher's place. I will not fail to convince my mistress of the good-will you bear her.

Scheherazade observing day, left off here, and next night resumed her discourse.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIRST NIGHT.

AFTER the confidant had testified to the jeweller her joy to see him so well disposed to serve Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia, the jeweller took the letter out of his bosom, and restored it to her, saying, Go, carry it quickly to the prince, and return this way that I may see his reply. Forget not to give him an account of our conversation.

The confidant took the letter and carried it to the prince, who answered it immediately. She returned to the jeweller's house to shew him the answer, which was in these words:

THE PRINCE OF PERSIA'S ANSWER TO SCHEMSELNIHAR.

"Your precious letter has had a great effect upon me, but not so great as I could have wished. You endeavour to comfort me for the loss of Ebn Thaher; alas! however sensible I am of this, it is but the least of my troubles. You know these troubles, and you know also that your presence alone can cure me. When will the time come that I shall enjoy it without fear of a separation? How distant does it seem to me! or shall we flatter ourselves that we may ever see it? You command me to preserve my-

self; I will obey you, since I have renounced my own will to follow only yours. Adieu."

After the jeweller had read this letter, he returned it to the confidant, who said, as she was going away, I will desire my mistress to put the same confidence in you that she did in Ebn Thaher. You shall hear of me to-morrow. Accordingly, next day she returned with a pleasant countenance. Your very looks, said he to her, inform me that you have brought Schemselnihar to the point you wished. It is true, replied the confidant, and you shall hear how I succeeded. I found yesterday, on my return, Schemselnihar expecting me with impatience; I gave her the prince of Persia's letter, and she read it with tears in her eyes. When she had done, I saw that she had abandoned herself to her usual sorrow. Madam, said I to her, it is doubtless Ebn Thaher's removal that troubles you; but suffer me to conjure you in the name of God, to alarm yourself no farther on his account. We have found another Ebn Thaher, who offers to oblige you with equal zeal; and, what is yet more important, with greater courage. Then I spoke to her of you, continued the slave, and acquainted her with the motive which led you to the prince of Persia's house. In short, I assured her that you would keep inviolably the secret betwixt her and the prince of Persia, and

that you were resolved to favour their amour with all your might. She seemed to be much relieved by my discourse. Ah! what obligations, said she, are the prince of Persia and I under to that honest man you speak of! I must be acquainted with him and see him, that I may hear from his own mouth what you tell me, and thank him for such unheard-of generosity towards persons on whose account he is no way obliged to interest himself. The sight of him will give me pleasure, and I shall omit nothing to confirm him in those good sentiments. Fail not to bring him to me to-morrow. Therefore, sir, be so good as to accompany me to the palace.

The confidant's proposal perplexed the jeweller. Your mistress, replied he, must allow me to say that she has not duly considered what she requires of me. Ebn Thaher's access to the caliph gave him admission every where: and the officers, who knew him, allowed him free access to Schemselnihar's palace; but as for me, how dare I enter? You see clearly that it is impossible. I entreat you to represent to Schemselnihar the reasons which prevent me from affording her that satisfaction; and acquaint her with all the ill consequences that would attend my compliance. If she considered it ever so little, she would find that it would expose me needlessly to very imminent danger.

The confidant endeavoured to encourage the

jeweller. Can you believe, said she, that Schemselnihar is so unreasonable as to expose you to the least danger by bringing you to her, from whom she expects such important services? Consider with yourself that there is not the least appearance of risk. My mistress and I are too much interested in this affair to involve you in any danger. You may depend upon me, and leave yourself to my conduct. After the thing is over, you will be the first to confess that your apprehensions were groundless.

The jeweller yielded to the confidant's assurances, and rose up to follow her: but notwithstanding his boasted courage, he was seized with such terror that his whole body trembled. In your present state, said she, I perceive it will be better for *you to* remain at home, and that Schemselnihar should take other measures to see you. It is not to be doubted but that to satisfy her desire she will come hither herself: the case being so, sir, I would not have you go: I am persuaded it will not be long ere you see her here. The confidant foresaw this; for she no sooner informed Schemselnihar of the jeweller's fear, but she prepared to go to his house.

He received her with all the expressions of profound respect. When she sat down, being a little fatigued, she unveiled herself, and exhibited to the jeweller such beauty as convinced him that the prince of Persia was excusable in giving his heart to

the caliph's favourite. Then she saluted the jeweller with a graceful air, and said to him, I could not hear with what zeal you have engaged in the prince of Persia's concerns and mine, without immediately determining to express my gratitude in person. I thank heaven for having so soon made up to us the loss of Ebn Thaher.

Scheherazade being obliged to stop here, because day began to appear, continued her story next morning in the following manner.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND SECOND NIGHT.

SCHEMSELNIHAR said many other obliging things to the jeweller, after which she returned to her palace. The jeweller went immediately to give an account of this visit to the prince of Persia; who said to him, as soon as he saw him, I have expected you impatiently. The trusty slave has brought me a letter from her mistress, but it does not relieve me. Whatever the lovely Schemselnihar says, I dare not hope, and my patience is exhausted; I know not now what measures to pursue; Ebn Thaher's departure reduces me to despair. He was my only support: in him I have lost every thing. I had flattered myself with some hopes by reason of his access to Schemselnihar.

After these words, which the prince spoke with so much eagerness, that he gave the jeweller no time to interrupt him, he said to the prince, No man can take more interest in your affliction than I do; and if you will have patience to hear me, you will perceive that I can relieve you. Upon this the prince became silent, and listened to him. I see, said the jeweller, that the only way to give you satisfaction is to devise a plan that will afford you an opportunity of conversing freely with Schemselnihar. This I wish

to procure you, and to-morrow will make the attempt. You must by no means expose yourself to enter Schemselnihar's palace; you know by experience the danger of that step. I know a fitter place for this interview, where you will be safe. When the jeweller had finished, the prince embraced him with transports of joy. You revive, said he, by this promise, a wretched lover, who was condemned to die. You have fully repaired the loss of Ebn Thaher; whatever you do will be well performed; I leave myself entirely to your conduct.

After the prince had thus thanked him for his zeal, the jeweller returned home, and next morning Schemselnihar's confidant came to him. He told her that he had given the prince of Persia hopes that he should shortly see her mistress. I am come on purpose, answered she, to concert measures with you for that end. I think this house will be convenient enough for their interview. I could receive them very well here, replied he, but I think they will have more liberty in another house of mine where no one resides at present; I will immediately furnish it for their reception. There remains nothing then for me to do, replied the confidant, but to bring Schemselnihar to consent to this. I will go and speak to her, and return speedily with an answer.

She was as diligent as her promise, and returning to the jeweller, told him that her mistress would not

fail to keep the appointment in the evening. In the mean time she gave him a purse, and told him it was to prepare a collation. He carried her immediately to the house were the lovers were to meet, that she might know whither to bring her mistress: and when she was gone, he went to borrow from his friends gold and silver plate, tapestry, rich cushions, and other furniture, with which he furnished the house very magnificently; and when he had put all things in order, went to the prince of Persia.

You may easily conceive the prince of Persia's joy, when the jeweller told him that he came to conduct him to the house he had prepared to receive him and Schemselnihar. This news made him forget all his former trouble. He put on a magnificent robe, and went without his retinue along with the jeweller; who led him through several by-streets that nobody might observe them, and at last brought him to the house, where they conversed together until Schemselnihar's arrival.

They did not wait long for this passionate lover. She came after evening prayer, with her confidant, and two other slaves. It is impossible to express the excess of joy that seized these two lovers when they saw one another. They sat down together upon a sofa, looking upon one another for some time, without being able to speak, they were so much overjoyed: but when their speech returned, they soon

made up for their silence. They said to each other so many tender things, as made the jeweller, the confidant, and the two other slaves weep. The jeweller however restrained his tears, to attend the collation, which he brought in himself. The lovers ate and drank little, after which they sat down again upon the sofa: Schemselnihar asked the jeweller if he had a lute, or any other instrument. The jeweller, who took care to provide all that could please her, brought her a lute: she spent some time in tuning it, and then sung.

Scheherazade stopped because she saw day begin to appear, and next night went on with her relation.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRD NIGHT.

WHILE Schemselnihar was charming the prince of Persia, and expressing her passion by words composed extempore, a great noise was heard; and immediately the slave, whom the jeweller had brought with him, came in great alarm to tell him that some people were breaking in at the gate; that he asked who they were, but instead of any answer the blows were redoubled. The jeweller, being alarmed, left Schemselnihar and the prince to inform himself of the truth of this intelligence. No sooner had he got to the court, than he perceived, notwithstanding the darkness of the night, a company of men armed with spears and cimeters, who had broken the gate, and came directly towards him. He stood close to a wall for fear of his life, and saw ten of them pass without being perceived by them. Finding he could give no great assistance to the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, he contented himself with lamenting their fate, and fled for refuge to a neighbour's house, who was not yet gone to bed. He did not doubt but this unexpected violence was by the caliph's order, who, he thought, had been informed of his favourite's meeting the prince of Persia there. He heard a great noise in his house, which continu-

ed till midnight: and when all was quiet, as he thought, he desired his neighbour to lend him a cimeter; and being thus armed, went on till he came to the gate of his own house: he entered the court full of fear, and perceived a man, who asked him who he was; he knew by his voice that it was his own slave. How did you manage, said he, to avoid being taken by the watch? Sir, answered the slave, I hid myself in a corner of the court, and I went out as soon as I heard the noise. But it was not the watch who broke into your house; they were robbers, who within these few days robbed another house in this neighbourhood. They doubtless had notice of the rich furniture you brought hither, and had that in view.

The jeweller thought his slave's conjecture probable enough. He entered the house, and saw that the robbers had taken all the furniture out of the apartment where he received Schemselnihar and her lover, that they had also carried off the gold and silver plate, and, in a word, had left nothing. Perceiving this desolation, he exclaimed, O heaven! I am irrecoverably ruined! What will my friends say, and what excuse can I make, when I shall tell them that the robbers have broken into my house, and robbed me of all they had generously lent me? I shall never be able to make up their loss. Besides, what is become of Schemselnihar and the prince of

Persia? This business will be so public, that it will be impossible but it must reach the caliph's ears. He will get notice of this meeting, and I shall fall a sacrifice to his fury. The slave, who was very much attached to him, endeavoured to comfort him. As to Schemselnihar, said he, the robbers would probably content themselves with stripping her, and you have reason to think that she is retired to her palace with her slaves. The prince of Persia too has probably escaped, so that you have reason to hope the caliph will never know of this adventure. As for the loss your friends have sustained, that is a misfortune that you could not avoid. They know very well the robbers are numerous, that they have not only pillaged the house I have already spoken of, but many other houses of the principal noblemen of the court: and they are not ignorant that, notwithstanding the orders given to apprehend them, nobody has been yet able to seize any of them [1]. You will be acquitted by restoring your friends the value of the things that are stolen, and, blessed be God, you will have enough left.

While they were waiting for day-light, the jeweller ordered the slave to mend the street door, which was broken, as well as he could: after which he returned to his usual residence with his slave, making melancholy reflections on what had happened. Ebn Thaher, said he to himself, has been wiser than I;

he foresaw the misfortune into which I have blindly thrown myself: would to God I had never meddled in this intrigue, which will, perhaps, cost me my life!

It was scarcely day when the report of the robbery spread through the city, and a great many of his friends and neighbours came to his house to express their concern for his misfortune; but were curious to know the particulars. He thanked them for their affection, and had at least the consolation, that he heard no one mention Schemselnihar, or the prince of Persia; which made him believe they were at their houses, or in some secure place.

When the jeweller was alone, his servants brought him something to eat, but he had no appetite. About noon one of his slaves came to tell him there was a man at the gate, whom he knew not, that desired to speak with him. The jeweller, not choosing to receive a stranger into his house, rose up, and went to speak to him. Though you do not know me, said the man, I know you, and I am come to talk to you about an important affair. The jeweller desired him to come in. No, answered the stranger; if you please, rather take the trouble to go with me to your other house. How know you, asked the jeweller, that I have another house? I know very well, answered the stranger; follow me, and do not fear any thing: I have something to communicate which will please you. The jeweller went immediately with

him; and after he had considered by the way how the house they were going to had been robbed, he said to him that it was not fit to receive him.

When they were before the house, and the stranger saw the gate half broken down, he said to the jeweller, I see you have told me the truth. I will conduct you to a place where we shall be better accommodated. When he had thus spoken, he went on, and walked all the rest of the day without stopping. The jeweller being fatigued with his walk, vexed to see night approach, and that the stranger went on without telling him where he was going, began to lose his patience, when they came to a path which led to the Tygris. As soon as they reached the river, they embarked in a little boat, and went over. The stranger led the jeweller through a long street, where he had never been before; and after he had brought him through several by-streets, he stopped at a gate, which he opened. He made the jeweller go in before him, he then shut and bolted the gate, with a huge iron bolt, and conducted him to a chamber, where there were ten other men, all of them as great strangers to the jeweller as he who had brought him hither.

These ten men received him without much ceremony. They desired him to sit down, of which he had great need; for he was not only out of breath with walking so far, but his terror at finding himself

with people whom he thought he had reason to fear would have disabled him from standing. They waited for their leader to go to supper, and as soon as he came it was served up. They washed their hands, obliged the jeweller to do the like, and to sit at table with them. After supper the men asked him, if he knew whom he spoke to? He answered, No; and that he knew not the place he was in. Tell us your last night's adventure, said they to him, and conceal nothing from us. The jeweller, being astonished at this request, answered, Gentlemen, it is probable you know it already. That is true, replied they; the young man and the young lady, who were at your house yesternight, told it us; but we would know it from your own mouth. The jeweller needed no more to inform him that he spoke to the robbers who had broken into and plundered his house. Gentlemen, said he, I am much troubled for that young man and lady; can you give me any tidings of them?

Scheherazade broke off here, to give notice to the sultan of the Indies that day appeared, and next night resumed her discourse.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTH NIGHT.

Upon the jeweller's inquiry of the thieves, if they knew any thing of the young man and the young lady, they answered, Be not concerned for them, they are safe and well; so saying, they shewed him two closets, where they assured him they were separately shut up. They added, We are informed you alone know what relates to them, which we no sooner came to understand, but we shewed them all imaginable respect, and were so far from doing them any injury, that we treated them with all possible kindness on your account. We answer for the same, proceeded they, for your own person, you may put unlimited confidence in us.

The jeweller being encouraged by this assurance, and overjoyed to hear that the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar were safe, resolved to engage the robbers yet farther in their interest. He commended them, flattered them, and gave them a thousand benedictions. Gentlemen, said he, I must confess I have not the honour to know you, yet it is no small happiness to me that I am not wholly unknown to you; and I can never be sufficiently grateful for the favours which that knowledge has procured me at your hands. Not to mention your great humanity, I am fully persuaded now, that persons of your cha-

racter are capable of keeping a secret faithfully, and none are so fit to undertake a great enterprise, which you can best bring to a good issue by your zeal, courage, and intrepidity. Confiding in these qualities, which are so much your due, I hesitate not to tell you my whole history, with that of those two persons you found in my house, with all the fidelity you desire me.

After the jeweller had thus secured, as he thought, the confidence of the robbers, he made no scruple to relate to them the whole amour of the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, from the beginning of it to the time he had received them into his house.

The robbers were greatly astonished at all the particulars they heard, and could not forbear exclaiming, How! is it possible that the young man should be the illustrious Ali Ebn Becar, prince of Persia, and the young lady the fair and celebrated beauty Schemselnihar? The jeweller assured them nothing was more certain, and that they needed not think it strange, that persons of so distinguished a character should wish not to be known.

Upon this assurance of their quality, the robbers went immediately, one after another, and threw themselves at their feet, imploring their pardon, and protesting that nothing of the kind would have happened to them, had they been informed of the

quality of their persons before they broke into the house; and that they would by their future conduct endeavour to make amends for the crime they had thus ignorantly committed. Then turning to the jeweller, they told him, they were heartily sorry they could not restore to him all that had been taken from him, part of it being no longer in their possession: but as for what remained, if he would content himself with his plate, it should be forthwith put into his hand.

The jeweller was overjoyed at the favour done him, and after the robbers had delivered to him the plate, they required of the prince, Schemselnihar, and him, to promise them upon oath, that they would not betray them, and they would carry them to a place whence they might easily return to their respective homes. The prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, replied, that they might rely on their words, but since they desired an oath of them, they solemnly swore not to discover them. The thieves, satisfied with this, immediately went out with them.

On the way, the jeweller, uneasy at not seeing the confidant and the two slaves, came up to Schemselnihar, and begged her to inform him what was become of them. She answered, she knew nothing of them, and that all she could tell him was, that she was carried away from his house, ferried over the river, and brought to the place from whence they were just come.

Schemselnihar and the jeweller had no farther conversation; they let the robbers conduct them with the prince to the river's side, when the robbers immediately took boat, and carried them over to the opposite bank.

While the prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller were landing, they heard the noise of the horse patrole coming towards them, just as the boat had conveyed the robbers back.

The commander of the brigade demanded of the prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, who they were, and whence they had come so late? Frightened as they were, and apprehensive of saying any thing that might prejudice them, they could not speak; but at length it was necessary they should. The jeweller's mind being most at ease, he said, Sir, I can assure you, we are respectable people of the city. The persons who have just landed us, and are now returned to the other side of the water, are thieves, who having last night broken open the house where we were, pillaged it, and afterwards carried us to their quarters, whence by fair words, we prevailed on them to let us have our liberty; and they brought us hither. They have restored us part of the booty they had taken from us. At which words he shewed the parcel of plate he had recovered.

The commander, not satisfied with what the jeweller had told him, came up to him and the prince of Persia, and looking steadfastly at them, said, Tell

me truly, who is this lady? How came you to know her?

These questions embarrassed them so much that neither of them could answer; till at length Schemselnihar extricated them from their difficulty, and taking the commander aside, told him who she was; which he no sooner heard, than he alighted with expressions of great respect and politeness, and ordered his men to bring two boats.

When the boats were come, he put Schemselnihar into one, and the prince of Persia and the jeweller into the other, with two of his people in each boat; with orders to accompany each of them whithersoever they were bound. The two boats took different routes, but we shall at present speak only of that which contained the prince and jeweller.

The prince, to save his guides trouble, bade them land the jeweller at his house, naming the place. The guide, by this direction, stopped just before the caliph's palace, which put both him and the jeweller into great alarm; for although they had heard the commander's orders to his men, they could not help imagining they were to be delivered up to the guard, to be brought before the caliph next morning.

This nevertheless was not the intention of the guides. For after they had landed them, they, by their master's command, recommended them to an officer of the caliph's guard, who assigned them two

soldiers to conduct them by land to the prince's house, which was at some distance from the river. They arrived there, but so tired and weary that they could hardly move.

The prince being come home, with the fatigue of his journey, and this misadventure to himself and Schemselnihar, which deprived him of all hope of ever seeing her more, fell into a swoon on his sofa. While the greatest part of his servants were endeavouring to recover him, the rest gathered about the jeweller, and begged him to tell them what had happened to the prince their lord, whose absence had occasioned them such inexpressible uneasiness.

Here Scheherazade stopped, because the day began to appear, but next night resumed her discourse to the sultan in the following manner.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTH NIGHT.

I TOLD your majesty last night, that whilst the greatest part of the prince's domestics were endeavouring to recover him from his swoon, others of them got about the jeweller, desiring to know what had happened to their lord. The jeweller, who took care to discover nothing that was not proper for them to know, told them that it was an extraordinary case, but that it was not a time to relate it, and that they would do better to go and assist the prince. By good fortune the prince came to himself that moment, and those that but just before required his history with so much earnestness retreated to a respectful distance.

Although the prince had in some measure recovered his recollection, he continued so weak, that he could not open his mouth to speak. He answered only by signs, even to his nearest relations, when they spoke to him. He remained in this condition till next morning, when the jeweller came to take leave of him. He could answer only by a movement of his eyes, and holding out his right hand; but when he saw he was laden with a bundle of plate which the thieves had returned to him, he made a sign to his servants that they should take it and carry it to his house.

The jeweller had been expected with great impatience by his family the day he departed with the stranger; but now he was quite given over, and it was no longer doubted but some disaster had befallen him. His wife, children, and servants, were in the greatest alarm, and lamenting him. When he arrived, their joy was excessive; yet they were troubled to see that he was so much altered in the short interval, that he was hardly to be known. This was occasioned by the great fatigue of the preceding day, and the fears he had undergone all night, which would not permit him to sleep. Finding himself much indisposed, he continued at home two days, and would admit only one of his intimate friends to visit him.

The third day, finding himself something better, he thought he might recover strength by going abroad to take the air; and therefore went to the shop of a rich merchant of his acquaintance, with whom he continued long in conversation. As he was rising to take leave of his friend to return home, he observed a woman making a sign to him, whom he presently knew to be the confidant of Schemselnihar. Between fear and joy, he made what haste he could away, without looking at her; but she followed him, as he feared she would, the place they were in being by no means proper to converse in. As he quickened his pace, she, not being able to overtake him, every now and then called out to him to stay.

He heard her; but after what had happened, he did not think fit to speak to her in public, for fear of giving cause to suspect that he was connected with Schemselnihar. It was known to every body in Bagdad, that this woman belonged to her, and executed all her little commissions. He continued the same pace, and at length reached a mosque, where he knew but few people came. He entered, and she followed him, and they had a long conversation together, without any body overhearing them.

Both the jeweller and confidant expressed much joy at seeing each other, after the strange adventure of the robbers, and their reciprocal apprehension for each other, without regarding their own particular persons.

The jeweller wished her to relate to him how she escaped with the two slaves, and what she knew of Schemselnihar from the time he lost sight of her; but so great was her eagerness to know what had happened to him from the time of their unexpected separation, that he found himself obliged to satisfy her. Having given you the detail you desired, said he, oblige me in your turn, which she did in the following manner:

When I first saw the robbers, I hastily imagined that they were soldiers of the caliph's guard, and that the caliph being informed of Schemselnihar's going out, had sent them to put her, the prince, and

all of us to death. Under this impression I immediately got up to the terrace of your house, when the thieves entered the apartment where the prince and Schemselnihar were, and I was soon after followed by that lady's two slaves. From terrace to terrace, we came at last to a house of very honest people, who received us with much civility, and with whom we lodged that night.

Next morning, after thanking the master of the house for our good usage, we returned to Schemselnihar's palace, where we entered in great disorder and distress, because we could not learn the fate of the two unfortunate lovers. The other women of Schemselnihar were astonished to see me return without their lady. We told them, we had left her at the house of one of her female friends, and that she would send for us when she wished to come home; with which excuse they seemed well satisfied.

For my part, I spent the day in great uneasiness, and when night arrived, opening a small private gate, I espied a little boat on the canal which seemed driven by the stream. I called to the waterman, and desired him to row up each side of the river, and look if he could not see a lady; and if he found her, to bring her along with him. The two slaves and I waited impatiently for his return, and at length, about midnight, we saw the boat coming down with two men in it, and a woman lying along in the stern.

When the boat was come up, the two men helped the woman to rise, and then it was I knew her to be Schemselnihar. I cannot express my joy at seeing her.

Here Scheherazade finished her narrative for this night, intending to resume it the night following, when she proceeded.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTH NIGHT.

We yesterday left Schemselnihar's confidant in the mosque, telling the jeweller what had happened from the time of their separation, and all the circumstances of Schemselnihar's return. She continued thus.

I gave my hand to Schemselnihar to help her out of the boat; she had great need of my assistance, for she could hardly stand. When she was landed, she whispered me in a tone expressive of her affliction, and bade me go and take a purse of one thousand pieces of gold and give it to the two soldiers that had accompanied her. I left her to the care of the two slaves to support her, and having ordered the two soldiers to wait for me a moment, I took the purse and returned instantly; I gave it to them, and having paid the waterman, shut the door.

I then followed my lady, and overtook her before she had reached her chamber. We immediately undressed her, and put her to bed, where she had not long been, before she became so ill, that for the whole of the night we almost despaired of her life. The day following, her other women expressed a great desire to see her; but I told them she had been greatly fatigued, and wanted rest. The

other two women and I gave her all the assistance in our power; but we should have given over every hope of her recovery, had I not at last perceived that the wine which we every now and then gave her had a sensible effect in recruiting her strength. By importunity we at length prevailed with her to eat.

When she recovered the use of her speech, for she had hitherto only wept, groaned, and sighed, I begged of her to tell me how she had escaped out of the hands of the robbers. Why would you require of me, said she, with a profound sigh, to renew my grief? Would to God the robbers had taken away my life, rather than have preserved it; my misfortunes would then have had an end, whereas I live but to increase my sufferings.

Madam, I replied, I beg you would not refuse me this favour. You cannot but know that the wretched feel a consolation in relating their greatest misfortunes; what I ask would alleviate yours, if you would have the goodness to gratify me.

Hear then, said she, the most afflicting adventure that could possibly have happened to one so deeply in love as myself, who considered myself as at the utmost point of my wishes. You must know, when I first saw the robbers enter, sword in hand, I considered it as the last moment of our lives. But death was not an object of regret, since I thought I

was to die with the prince of Persia. However, instead of murdering us, as I expected, two of the robbers were ordered to take care of us, whilst their companions were busied in packing up the goods they found in the house. When they had done, and got their bundles upon their backs, they went out, and took us with them.

As we went along, one of those that had charge of us demanded of me who I was? I answered, I was a dancer. He put the same question to the prince, who replied, he was a citizen.

When we had reached the place of our destination, a new alarm seized us. They gathered about us, and after having considered my dress, and the rich jewels I was adorned with, they seemed to suspect I had disguised my quality. Dancers, said they, do not use to be dressed as you are. Tell us truly who you are?

When they saw I made no reply, they asked the prince once more who he was, for they told him they plainly perceived he was not the person he pretended to be. He did not satisfy them much more than I had done; he only told them he came to see the jeweller, naming him, who was the owner of the house where they found us. I know this jeweller, replied one of the rogues, who seemed to have some authority over the rest: I owe him some obligations, which he knows nothing of, and I take upon me to

bring him hither to-morrow morning; but you must not expect, continued he, to be released till he arrives and tells us who you are; in the mean time, I promise you there shall be no injury offered to you.

The jeweller was brought next morning, who thinking to oblige us, as he really did, declared to the robbers the whole truth. They immediately came and asked my pardon, and I believe did the like to the prince, who was shut up in another room. They protested to me, they would not have broken open the house where we were, had they known it was the jeweller's. They soon after took us (the prince, the jeweller, and myself), carried us to the river side, put us aboard a boat, and rowed us across the water; but we were no sooner landed, than a party of horse-patrole came up to us.

The robbers fled; I took the commander aside, and told him my name, and that the night before I had been seized by robbers, who forced me along with them; but having been told who I was, released me, and the two persons he saw with me, on my account. He alighted out of respect to me; and expressing great joy at being able to oblige me, caused two boats to be brought: putting me and two of his soldiers, whom you have seen, into one, he escorted me hither; but what is become of the prince and his friend I cannot tell.

I trust, added she, melting into tears, no harm has befallen them since our separation; and I do not doubt but the prince's concern for me is equal to mine for him. The jeweller, to whom we have been so much obliged, ought to be recompensed for the loss he has sustained on our account. Fail not, therefore, to take two purses of a thousand pieces of gold in each, and carry them to him to-morrow morning in my name, and be sure to inquire after the prince's welfare.

When my good mistress had done speaking, I endeavoured, as to the last article of inquiring into the prince's welfare, to persuade her to endeavour to triumph over her passion, after the danger she had so lately escaped almost by miracle. Make me no answer, said she, but do what I require.

I was obliged to be silent, and am come hither to obey her commands. I have been at your house, but not finding you at home, and uncertain as I was of where you might be found, was about going to the prince of Persia; but not daring to attempt the journey, I have left the two purses with a particular friend, and if you will wait here, I will go and fetch them immediately.

Scheherazade perceiving the day begin to approach, stopped here; but continued the story the night following, and said to the sultan—

THE TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTH NIGHT.

THE confidant soon returned to the jeweller in the mosque, where she had left him, and giving him the two purses, bade him out of them satisfy his friends. They are much more than is necessary, said he, but I dare not refuse the present from so good and generous a lady to her most humble servant; I beseech you to assure her from me, that I shall preserve an eternal remembrance of her goodness. He then agreed with the confidant, that she should find him at the house where she had first seen him, whenever she had occasion to impart any thing from Schemselnihar, or to hear any tidings of the prince of Persia: and so they parted.

The jeweller returned home well pleased, not only that he had got wherewithal so fully to satisfy his friends, but also to think that no person in Bagdad could possibly know that the prince and Schemselnihar had been in his other house when it was robbed. It is true, he had acquainted the thieves with it, but on their secrecy he thought he might very well depend. Next morning he visited the friends who had obliged him, and found no difficulty in satisfying them. He had money in hand to furnish his other house, in which he placed servants.

Thus he forgot all his past danger, and the next evening waited on the prince of Persia.

The prince's domestics told the jeweller, that he came very opportunely, as the prince, since he had parted with him, was reduced to such a state that his life was in danger. They introduced him softly into his chamber, and he found him in a condition that excited his pity. He was lying on his bed, with his eyes closed; but when the jeweller saluted him, and exhorted him to take courage, he recollected him, opened his eyes, and gave him a look that sufficiently declared the greatness of his affliction, infinitely beyond what he felt after he first saw Schemselnihar. He grasped him by the hand, to testify his friendship, and told him, in a feeble voice, that he was extremely obliged to him for coming so far to visit one so unhappy and wretched.

Prince, replied the jeweller, mention not, I beseech you, any obligations you owe to me. I wish the good offices I have endeavoured to do you had had a better effect; but at present, let us talk only of your health; which, in the state I see you, I fear you greatly injure by unreasonably abstaining from proper nourishment.

The prince's servants took this opportunity to tell him, it was with the greatest difficulty they had prevailed on their master to take the smallest refreshment, and that for some time he had taken nothing.

This obliged the jeweller to entreat the prince to let his servants bring him something to eat.

After the prince had, through the persuasion of the jeweller, eaten more than he had hitherto done, he commanded the servants to leave him alone with his friend. When the room was clear, he said, Besides the misfortune that distracts me, I have been exceedingly concerned to think what a loss you have sustained on my account; and it is but just I should make you some recompence. But before I do this, after begging your pardon a thousand times, I conjure you to tell me whether you have learnt any tidings of Schemselnihar, since I had the misfortune to be parted from her.

Here the jeweller, instructed by the confidant, related to him all that he knew of Schemselnihar's arrival at her palace, her state of health from that time till she recovered, and how she had sent her confidant to him to inquire after his welfare.

To all this the prince replied only by sighs and tears. He made an effort to get up, and calling his servants, went himself to his wardrobe, and having caused several bundles of rich furniture and plate to be packed up, he ordered them to be carried to the jeweller's house.

The jeweller would fain have declined this kind offer; but although he represented that Schemselnihar had already made him more than sufficient

amends for what he had lost, the prince would be obeyed. The jeweller was therefore obliged to make all possible acknowledgments, and protested how much he was confounded at his highness's liberality. He would then have taken his leave, but the prince desired him to stay, and they passed good part of the night in conversation.

Next morning the jeweller waited again on the prince, who made him sit down by him. You know, said he, there is an end proposed in all things: that which the lover proposes, is to enjoy the beloved object in spite of all opposition. If once he loses that hope, he must not think to live. Such is my hard case; for twice when I have been at the very point of fulfilling my desires, I have suddenly been torn from her I loved in the most cruel manner imaginable. It remains for me only to think of death, and I had sought it, but that our holy religion forbids suicide; but I need not anticipate it; I need not wait long. Here he stopped, and vented his passion in groans, sighs, sobs, and tears, which flowed abundantly.

The jeweller, who knew no better way of diverting him from his despair than by bringing Schemselnihar into his mind, and giving him some shadow of hope, told him, he feared the confidant might be come from her lady, and therefore it would not be proper to stay any longer from home. I will let you

go, said the prince, but conjure you, that if you see her, you recommend to her to assure Schemselnihar, that if I die, as I expect to do shortly, I shall love her to the last moment, even in the grave.

The jeweller returned home, and waited in expectation of seeing the confidant, who came some hours after, but all in tears, and in great affliction. The jeweller alarmed, asked her what was the matter? She answered, that Schemselnihar, the prince, herself, and he, were all ruined. Hear the sad news, said she, as it was told me just upon my entering the palace after I had left you.

Schemselnihar had for some fault chastised one of the slaves you saw with her when you met in your other house. The slave, enraged at the ill treatment, ran immediately away, and finding the gate open, went out; so that we have just reason to believe she has discovered all to an eunuch of the guard, who gave her protection.

But this is not all; the other slave her companion has fled too, and has taken refuge in the caliph's palace. So that we may well fear she has borne her part in this discovery: for just as I came away, the caliph had sent twenty of his eunuchs for Schemselnihar, who have carried her to the palace. I just found means to come and tell you this. I know not what has passed, yet I fear no good; but

above all, I recommend to you to keep the secret inviolate.

The day, which now began to appear, obliged Scheherazade to stop, but she continued the same story the night following.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND NINTH NIGHT.

Sir, said she, the confidant added to what she had related before to the jeweller, that it was proper he should go immediately and acquaint the prince with the whole affair, that he might be prepared for every event, and keep faithful to the common cause. She went away in haste, without staying for any answer.

What answer could the jeweller have made in the condition he was in? He stood motionless as if thunderstruck. He found, however, that there was no time to be lost, and immediately went to give the prince information. He addressed him with an air, that sufficiently shewed the bad news he brought. Prince, said he, arm yourself with courage and patience, and prepare to receive the most terrible shock that ever you had to encounter.

Tell me in a few words, replied the prince, what is the matter, without keeping me in suspense; I am, if necessary, prepared to die.

Then the jeweller repeated all that he had learnt from the confidant. You see, continued he, your destruction is inevitable. Rise, save yourself by flight, for the time is precious. You, of all men, must not expose yourself to the anger of the caliph, and, less than any, confess in the midst of torture.

At these words the prince was ready to expire through grief, affliction, and fear. However, he recovered himself, and asked the jeweller what resolution he would advise him to take in this conjuncture, every moment of which ought to be employed. The jeweller told him, he thought nothing remained, but that he should immediately take horse, and hasten away towards Anbar*, that he might get thither before day. Take what servants and swift horses you think necessary, continued he, and suffer me to escape with you.

The prince, seeing nothing more to be done, immediately gave orders to prepare such an equipage as would be least troublesome; took money and jewels, and having taken leave of his mother, departed with the jeweller and such servants as he had chosen.

They travelled all night without stopping, till at length, both their horses and themselves being spent with so long a journey, they halted to rest themselves.

They had hardly alighted before they found themselves surrounded and assaulted by a band of robbers. They defended their lives for some time courageously; but at length the prince's servants being all killed, both he and the jeweller were obliged to yield at discretion. The robbers, however, spared

* A city on the Tygris, twenty leagues below Bagdad.

their lives, but after they had seized the horses and baggage, they took away their clothes and left them naked.

When the thieves were gone, the prince said to the jeweller, What think you of our adventure and condition? Had I not better have tarried in Bagdad, and awaited my death? Prince, replied the jeweller, it is the decree of Heaven that we should thus suffer. It has pleased God to add affliction to affliction, and we must not murmur, but receive his chastisements with submission. Let us stay no longer here, but seek for some retreat where we may perhaps be relieved.

Let me die, said the prince; for what signifies it whether I die here or elsewhere. Perhaps while we are talking, Schemselnihar is no more, and why should I endeavour to live after she is dead! The jeweller, by his intreaty, at length prevailed on him, and they had not gone far before they came to a mosque, which was open; they entered it, and passed there the remainder of the night.

At day-break a man came into the mosque. When he had ended his prayer, as he turned about to go away, he perceived the prince and jeweller, who were sitting in a corner. He came up to them, and after having saluted them with a great deal of civility, said, I perceive you are strangers.

The jeweller answered, You are not deceived.

We have been robbed to-night in coming from Bagdad, as you may see, and have retired hither for shelter, but we know not to whom to apply. If you think fit to accompany me to my house, answered the man, I will give you all the assistance in my power.

Upon this obliging offer, the jeweller turned to the prince, and whispered, This man, as you perceive, sir, does not know us, and we have reason to fear that somebody else may come who does. We cannot, I think, refuse his offer. Do as you please, said the prince; I am willing to be guided by your discretion.

The man observing the prince and jeweller consulting together, and thinking they made some difficulty to accept his offer, asked them if they were resolved what to do? The jeweller answered, We are ready to follow you; all we hesitate about is, that we are ashamed to appear thus naked.

Fortunately the man had it in his power to cover them sufficiently till they could get to his house. As soon as they had entered, he brought a very handsome suit for each of them. As he thought they must be hungry, and might wish to be alone, he had several dishes brought to them by a slave; but they ate little, especially the prince, who was so dejected and dispirited, that he gave the jeweller cause to fear he would die. Their host visited them

several times in the course of the day, and in the evening, as he knew they wanted rest, he left them early. But he was no sooner in bed, than the jeweller was forced to call him again to assist at the death of the prince of Persia. He found him breathe short, and with difficulty, which gave him reason to fear he had but few minutes to live. Coming near him, the prince said, It is all over, and I am glad you are witness of my last words. I quit life with a great deal of satisfaction; I need not tell you the reason, for you know it already. All my concern is, that I cannot die in the arms of my dear mother, who has always loved me tenderly, and for whom I had a reciprocal affection. Let her know how much I was concerned at this, and request her in my name to have my body removed to Bagdad, that she may have an opportunity to bedew my tomb with her tears, and assist my departed soul with her prayers. He then took notice of the master of the house, and thanked him for his kindness in taking him in; and after desiring him to let his body rest with him till it should be conveyed to Bagdad, he expired.

Scheherazade had just concluded her story of the prince's death, when she perceived the day-light appear; whereupon she left off, and resumed her discourse the next night as follows.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TENTH NIGHT.

THE day after the prince's death, the jeweller took the opportunity of a numerous caravan that was going to Bagdad, and arrived there in safety. He first went home to change his clothes, and then hastened to the prince's palace, where every body was alarmed at not seeing the prince with him. He desired them to acquaint the prince's mother that he wished to speak with her, and it was not long before he was introduced to her in a hall, with several of her women about her. Madam, said he to her, with an air that sufficiently denoted the ill news he brought, God preserve you, and shower down upon you the choicest of his blessings. You cannot be ignorant that he alone disposes of us at his pleasure.

The princess would not permit him to proceed, but exclaimed, Alas! you bring me the news of my son's death? She and her women at the same time wept and sobbed loudly. At length she checked her sighs and groans, and begged of him to continue without concealing from her the least circumstance of such a melancholy separation. He satisfied her, and when he had done, she farther demanded of him, if her son the prince had not given him in

charge something more particular in his last moments? He assured her his last words were, that it was to him the most afflicting circumstance that he must die so far distant from his dear mother, and that the only thing he wished was, that she would have his corpse transported to Bagdad. Accordingly early next morning the princess set out with her women and great part of her slaves, to bring her son's body to her own palace.

When the jeweller, whom she had detained, had seen her depart, he returned home very sad and melancholy, at the reflection that so accomplished and amiable a prince was thus cut off in the flower of his age.

As he walked towards his house, dejected and musing, he saw a woman standing before him. He recognized her to be Schemselnihar's confidant. At the sight of her, his tears began to flow afresh, but he said nothing to her; and going into his own house, she followed him.

They sat down; when the jeweller beginning the conversation, asked the confidant, with a deep sigh, if she had heard of the death of the prince of Persia, and if it was on his account that she grieved. Alas! answered she, What! is that charming prince then dead? He has not lived long after his dear Schemselnihar. Beauteous souls! continued she, in whatsoever place ye now are, ye must be happy that

your loves will no more be interrupted. Your bodies were an obstacle to your wishes; but Heaven has delivered you from them; ye may now form the closest union.

The jeweller, who had heard nothing of Schemselnihar's death, and had not reflected that the confidant was in mourning, suffered fresh grief at this intelligence. Is Schemselnihar then dead? cried he. She is, replied the confidant, weeping afresh, and it is for her I wear these weeds. The circumstances of her death were extraordinary, continued she, and deserve to be known to you: but before I give you an account of them, I beg you to acquaint me with those of the prince of Persia, whom, with my dearest friend and mistress, I shall lament as long as I live.

The jeweller then gave the confidant the information she desired; and after he had told her all, even to the departure of the prince's mother to bring her son's body to Bagdad, she began and said, You have not forgotten that I told you the caliph had sent for Schemselnihar to his palace. He had, as we had every reason to believe, been informed of the amour betwixt her and the prince by the two slaves, whom he had examined apart. You may imagine, he would be exceedingly enraged at Schemselnihar's conduct, and give striking proofs of his jealousy and of his impending vengeance against the prince. But this was by no means the case. He

pitied Schemselnihar, and in some measure blamed himself for what had happened, in giving her so much freedom to walk about the city without being attended by his eunuchs. This is the only conclusion that could be drawn from his extraordinary behaviour towards her, as you will hear.

He received her with an open countenance; and when he observed that the melancholy which oppressed her did not lessen her beauty (for she appeared thus before him without surprise or fear), with a goodness worthy himself, he said, Schemselnihar, I cannot bear your appearing before me thus with an air which gives me infinite pain. You must needs be sensible how much I have always loved you, and be convinced of the sincerity of my passion by the continued demonstrations I have given of it. I can never change my mind, for I love you more than ever. You have enemies, Schemselnihar, proceeded he, and those enemies have insinuated things against your conduct, but all they have said against you has not made the least impression upon me. Shake off then this melancholy, and prepare to entertain me this night with some amusing conversation, after your accustomed manner. He said many other obliging things to her, and then desired her to step into a magnificent apartment near her own, and wait for him.

The afflicted Schemselnihar was very sensible of the caliph's kindness; but the more she thought

herself obliged to him, the more she was concerned that she was so far removed, perhaps for ever, from her prince, without whom she could not live.

This interview between the caliph and Schemselnihar, continued the confidant, took place whilst I was come to speak to you, and I learned the particulars of it from my companions who were present. But I had no sooner left you, proceeded she, than I went to my dear mistress again, and was eye-witness to what happened in the evening. I found her in the apartment I told you of; and as she thought I came from you, she drew near me, and whispering me, said, I am much obliged to you for the service you have done me, but feel it will be the last. She said no more; but I was not in a place proper to offer any thing to comfort her.

The caliph was introduced at night with the sound of instruments which her women played upon, and the collation was immediately served up. He took his mistress by the hand, and made her sit down with him on the sofa; she put such a force upon herself to please him, that she expired a few minutes after. In short, she was hardly set down, when she fell backwards. The caliph believed she had only fainted, and so we all thought; but she never recovered, and in this manner we lost her.

The caliph did her the honour to weep over her, not being able to refrain from tears; and before he

left the room ordered all the musical instruments to be broken; this was immediately done. I stayed with her corpse all night, and next morning washed and dressed her for her funeral, bathing her with my tears. The caliph had her interred in a magnificent tomb he had erected for her in her lifetime, in a place she had desired to be buried in. Now since you tell me, said she, the prince of Persia's body is to be brought to Bagdad, I will use my best endeavours that he shall be interred in the same tomb.

The jeweller was much surprised at this resolution of the confidant, and said, Certainly you do not consider that the caliph will never suffer this? You think the thing impossible, replied she; it is not. You will alter your opinion when I tell you that the caliph has given liberty to all her slaves, with a pension to each for their support. He has committed to me the care and keeping of my mistress's tomb, and allotted me an annual income for that purpose, and for my maintenance. Besides, the caliph, who was not ignorant of the amour between Schemselnihar and the prince, as I have already told you, without being offended, will not be sorry if after her death he be buried with her. To all this the jeweller had not a word to say. He earnestly intreated the confidant to conduct him to her mistress's tomb, that he might say his prayers

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over her. When he came in sight of it, he was not a little surprised to find a vast concourse of people of both sexes, who were come thither from all parts of Bagdad. As he could not come near the tomb, he said his prayers at a distance; and then going to the confidant, who was waiting hard by, said to her, I am now so far from thinking that what you proposed cannot be put in execution, that you and I need only publish abroad what we know of the amour of this unfortunate couple, and how the prince died much about the same time with his mistress. Before his corpse arrives, all Bagdad will concur to desire that two such faithful lovers, whom nothing could divide in affection whilst they lived, should not be separated when dead. It happened as he said; for as soon as it was known that the corpse was within a day's journey of the city, an infinite number of people went above twenty miles to meet it, and afterwards walked before it till it came to the city gate; where the confidant, waiting for that purpose, presented herself before the prince's mother, and begged of her, in the name of the whole city, who earnestly desired it, that she would be pleased to consent that the bodies of the two lovers, who had but one heart whilst they lived, from the time their mutual passion commenced, might be buried in the same tomb. The princess immediately consented; and the corpse of the prince, instead of being de-

posited in his own burying-place, was laid by Schemselnihar's side, after it had been carried along in procession at the head of an infinite number of people of all ranks. From that time all the inhabitants of Bagdad, and even strangers from all parts of the world where the Mahummedan religion prevails, have held that tomb in the highest veneration, and pay their devotions at it.

This, sir, said Scheherazade, who now perceived the day approach, is what I had to relate to your majesty concerning the loves of the fair Schemselnihar, and the amiable Aboulhassen Ali Ebn Becar, prince of Persia.

When Dinarzade observed her sister the sultaness had done speaking, she thanked her in the most obliging manner for the pleasure she had received from so interesting a story. If the sultan will but be pleased to let me live till to-morrow, said Scheherazade, I will relate that of prince Kummir al Zumaun*, which you will find yet more agreeable. Here she stopped; and the sultan, who could not resolve to put her to death, deferred hearing it till the following night.

* This word signifies in Arabic, the Moon of the Time, or the Moon of the Age.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH NIGHT.

NEXT day before it was light, and as soon as she had been awaked by her sister, Scheherazade related to the sultan of the Indies the story she had promised.

THE STORY OF THE LOVES OF KUMMIR AL ZUMMAUN, PRINCE OF THE ISLES OF THE CHILDREN OF KHALEDAN, AND OF BADOURA, PRINCESS OF CHINA.

About twenty days sail from the coast of Persia, there are islands in the main ocean called the Islands of the Children of Khaledan[2]. These islands are divided into four great provinces, which have all of them very flourishing and populous cities, forming together a powerful kingdom. It was formerly governed by a king named Shaw Zummaun*, who had four lawful wives, all daughters of kings, and sixty concubines.

Shaw Zummaun thought himself the most happy monarch of the world, on account of his peaceful

* That is to say, in Persian, King of the Time, or King of the Age.

and prosperous reign. One thing only disturbed his happiness; which was, that he was advanced in years, and had no children, though he had so many wives. He knew not to what to attribute this barrenness; and what increased his affliction was, that he was likely to leave his kingdom without a successor. He dissembled his discontent, and this dissimulation only heightened his uneasiness. At length he broke silence; and one day, after he had complained bitterly of his misfortune to his grand vizier, he asked him if he knew any remedy for it?

That wise minister replied, If what your majesty requires of me had depended on the ordinary rules of human wisdom, you had soon had an answer to your satisfaction; but my experience and knowledge fall far short of your question. It is to God only that we can apply in cases of this kind. In the midst of our prosperities, which often tempt us to forget him, he is pleased to mortify us in some instance, that we may address our thoughts to him, acknowledge his omnipotence, and ask of him what we ought to expect from him alone. Your majesty has subjects, proceeded he, who make a profession of honouring and serving God, and suffering great hardships for his sake; to them I would advise you to have recourse, and engage them, by alms, to join their prayers with yours. Perhaps some one among

them may be so pure and pleasing to God as to obtain a hearing for your prayers.

Shaw Zummaun approved this advice, and thanked his vizier. He immediately caused alms to be given to every community of these holy men in his dominions: and having sent for the superiors, declared to them his intention, and desired them to acquaint their devout men with it.

The king obtained of Heaven what he requested, for in nine months time he had a son by one of his wives. To express his gratitude to Heaven, he sent fresh alms to the communities of devotees, and the prince's birth-day was celebrated not only in his capital, but throughout his dominions, for a whole week. The prince was brought to him as soon as born, and he found him so beautiful that he gave him the name of Kummir al Zummaun, or *Moon of the Age.*

He was brought up with all imaginable care; and when he had arrived at a proper age, his father appointed him an experienced governor and able preceptors. These persons, distinguished by their capacity, found in him a ready wit capable of receiving all the instructions that were proper to be given him, as well in relation to morals as other knowledge which a prince ought to possess. As he grew up, he learned all his exercises, and acquitted himself with

such grace and wonderful address, as to charm all that saw him, and particularly the sultan his father.

When he had attained the age of fifteen, the sultan, who tenderly loved him, and gave him every day new marks of his affection, proposed to afford a still higher demonstration by resigning his throne to him, and he accordingly acquainted his grand vizier with his intentions. I fear, said he, lest my son should lose in the inactivity of youth those advantages which nature and my education have given him; therefore, since I am advanced in age, and ought to think of retirement, I propose to resign the government to him, and pass the remainder of my days in the satisfaction of seeing him reign. I have borne the fatigue of a crown till I am weary of it, and think it is now proper for me to retire.

The grand vizier declined offering all the reasons he could have alleged to dissuade the sultan from such a proceeding; on the contrary, he appeared to acquiesce with him in his opinion. Sir, replied he, the prince is yet but young, and it would not, in my humble opinion, be advisable to burden him with the weight of a crown so soon. Your majesty fears, with great reason, his youth may be corrupted by indolence: but to avoid this danger, do not you think it would be proper to marry him? Marriage forms attachment, and prevents dissipation. Your majesty might then admit him of your council,

where he would learn by degrees the art of reigning; and so be prepared to receive your authority, whenever by your own experience you shall think him qualified.

Shaw Zummaun approved the advice of his prime minister; and summoned the prince to appear before him, at the same time that he dismissed the grand vizier.

The prince, who had been accustomed to see his father only at certain times without being sent for, was a little startled at this summons; when, therefore, he came into his presence, he saluted him with great respect, and stood with his eyes fixed on the ground.

The sultan perceiving his constraint, addressed him with great mildness, Do you know, son, for what reason I have sent for you? The prince modestly replied, God alone knows the heart: I shall hear it from your majesty with pleasure. I sent for you, resumed the sultan, to inform you that it is my intention to provide a proper marriage for you: what do you think of my design?

The prince heard this with great uneasiness: he was greatly agitated, and knew not what answer to make. After a few moments silence, he replied, Sir, I beseech you to pardon me if I seem surprised at the declaration you have made. I did not expect such proposals at my present age. I know not

whether I could prevail on myself to marry, on account of the trouble incident to a married life, and the many treacheries of women, which I have read of. I may not be always of the same mind, yet I conceive it will require time to determine on what your majesty requires of me.

Scheherazade would have gone on, but it being day she desisted, and reserved what she had to say for the night following; when she resumed her story.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWELFTH NIGHT.

THE prince's answer extremely afflicted his father. He was not a little grieved to discover his aversion to marriage; yet would not charge him with disobedience, nor exert his paternal authority. He contented himself with telling him, he would not force his inclinations, but give him time to consider of the proposal; and reflect, that a prince destined to govern a great kingdom ought to take some care to leave a successor; and that in giving himself that satisfaction he communicated it to his father, who would be glad to see himself revive in his son and his issue.

Shaw Zummaun said no more to the prince, but admitted him into his council, and gave him every reason to be satisfied. At the end of the year he took him aside, and said to him; My son, have you thoroughly considered what I proposed to you last year about marrying? Will you still refuse me that pleasure I expect from your obedience, and suffer me to die without affording me that satisfaction?

The prince seemed less disconcerted than before; and was not long answering his father to this effect: Sir, I have not neglected to consider of your proposal; but after the maturest reflection, find myself

more confirmed in my resolution to continue in a state of celibacy. The infinite mischief which women have caused in the world, and which are on record in our histories, and the accounts I daily hear to their disadvantage, are the motives which powerfully influence me against having any thing to do with them; so that I hope your majesty will pardon me if I presume to tell you, it will be in vain to solicit me any further upon this subject. As soon as he had thus spoken, he quitted the sultan abruptly without waiting his answer.

Any monarch but Shaw Zummaun would have been angry at such freedom in a son, and would have made him repent; but he loved him, and preferred gentle methods before he proceeded to compulsion. He communicated this new cause of discontent to his prime minister. I have followed your advice, said he, but Kummir al Zummaun is farther than ever from complying with my desires. He delivered his determination in such free terms, that it required all my reason and moderation to keep my temper. Fathers who so earnestly desire children as I did this son are fools, who seek to deprive themselves of that rest which it is in their own power to enjoy without controul. Tell me, I beseech you, how I shall reclaim a disposition so rebellious to my will?

Sir, answered the grand vizier, patience brings

many things about that before seemed impracticable; but it may be this affair is of a nature not likely to succeed that way. Your majesty will have no cause to reproach yourself for precipitation, if you would give the prince another year to consider your proposal. If in this interval he return to his duty, you will have the greater satisfaction, as you will have employed only paternal love to induce him; and if he still continue averse when this is expired, your majesty may in full council observe, that it is highly necessary for the good of the state that he should marry; and it is not likely he will refuse to comply before so grave an assembly, which you honour with your presence.

The sultan, who so anxiously desired to see his son married, thought this long delay an age; however, though with much difficulty, he yielded to his grand vizier's reasons, which he could not disapprove.

Day-light, which now began to appear, imposed silence on Scheherazade; she renewed her story the night following, and said to the sultan Shier-ear—

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH NIGHT.

After the grand vizier was gone, the sultan went to the apartment of the mother of prince Kummir al Zummaun, to whom he had often expressed his desire to see the prince married. When he had told her, with much concern, how his son had a second time refused to comply with his wishes, and the indulgence which, by the advice of his grand vizer, he was inclined to shew him; he said, I know he has more confidence in you than he has in me, and will be more likely to attend to your advice. I therefore desire you would take an opportunity to talk to him seriously, and urge upon him, that if he persists in his obstinacy, he will oblige me to have recourse to measures which would be disagreeable to me, and which would give him cause to repent having disobeyed me.

Fatima, for so was the lady called, told the prince the first time she saw him, that she had been informed of his second refusal to marry; and how much chagrin his resolution had occasioned his father. Madam, replied the prince, I beseech you not to renew my grief upon that head. I fear, under my present uneasiness, something may escape me, which may not be consistent with the respect

I owe you. Fatima judged from this answer that this was not a proper time to speak to him, and therefore deferred what she had to say to another opportunity.

Some considerable time after, Fatima thought she had found a more favourable season, which gave her hopes of being heard upon that subject. Son, said she, I beg of you, if it be not disagreeable, to tell me what reason you have for your great aversion to marriage? If it be the wickedness of some women, nothing can be more unreasonable and weak. I will not undertake the defence of those that are bad; there are a great number of them undoubtedly; but it would be the height of injustice on their account to condemn all the sex. Alas! my son, you have in your books read of many bad women, who have occasioned great mischief, and I will not excuse them: but you do not consider how many monarchs, sultans, and other princes, there have been in the world, whose tyrannies, barbarities, and cruelties astonish those that read of them, as well as myself. Now, for one wicked woman, you will meet with a thousand tyrants and barbarians; and what torment do you think must a good woman undergo, who is matched with any of these wretches?

Madam, replied the prince, I doubt not there are a great number of wise, virtuous, good, affable, and well-behaved women in the world; would to God

they all resembled you! But what deters me is, the hazardous choice a man is obliged to make, and oftentimes one has not the liberty of following his inclination.

Let us suppose then, madam, continued he, that I had a mind to marry, as the sultan my father so earnestly desires; what wife, think you, would he be likely to provide for me? Probably a princess whom he would demand of some neighbouring prince, and who would think it an honour done him to send her. Handsome or ugly, she must be taken; nay, suppose no other princess excelled her in beauty, who can be certain that her temper would be good; that she would be affable, complaisant, easy, obliging, and the like? That her conversation would generally turn on solid subjects, and not on dress, fashions, ornaments, and a thousand such fooleries, which would disgust any man of sense? In a word, that she would not be haughty, proud, arrogant, impertinent, scornful, and waste an estate in frivolous expences, such as gay clothes, jewels, toys, and foolish mistaken magnificence?

You see, madam, continued he, by one single article, how many reasons a man may have to be disgusted at marriage. Let this princess be ever so perfect, accomplished, and irreproachable in her conduct, I have yet a great many more reasons not to alter my opinion and resolution.

What, son, exclaimed Fatima; have you then more reasons after those you have already alleged? I do not doubt of being able to answer them, and stop your mouth with a word. You may proceed, madam, returned the prince, and perhaps I may find a reply to your answer.

I mean, son, said Fatima, that it is easy for a prince, who has had the misfortune to marry such a wife as you describe, to get rid of her, and take care that she may not ruin the state. Ah, madam, replied the prince, but you do not consider what a mortification it would be to a person of my quality to be obliged to come to such an extremity. Would it not have been more for his honour and quiet that he had never run such a risk?

But, son, said Fatima once more, as you take the case, I apprehend you have a mind to be the last king of your race, who have reigned so long and gloriously over the isles of the children of Khaledan?

Madam, replied the prince, for myself I do not desire to survive the king my father; and if I should die before him, it would be no great matter of wonder, since so many children have died before their parents. But it is always glorious to a race of kings, that it should end with a prince worthy to be so, as I should endeavour to make myself like my predecessors, and like the first of our race.

From that time Fatima had frequent conferences

with her son the prince on the same subject; and she omitted no opportunity or argument to endeavour to root out his aversion to the fair sex; but he eluded all her reasonings by such arguments as she could not well answer, and continued unaltered.

The year expired, and, to the great regret of the sultan, prince Kummir al Zummaun gave not the least proof of having changed his sentiments. One day, therefore, when there was a great council held, the prime vizier, the other viziers, the principal officers of the crown, and the generals of the army being present, the sultan thus addressed the prince: My son, it is now a long while since I expressed to you my earnest desire to see you married, and I imagined you would have had more complaisance for a father, who required nothing unreasonable of you, than to oppose him so long. But after such a resistance on your part, which has almost worn out my patience, I have thought fit to propose the same thing once more to you in the presence of my council. It is not merely to oblige a parent that you ought to have acceded to my wish, the well-being of my dominions requires your compliance, and this assembly join with me in expecting it: declare yourself, then; that your answer may regulate my proceedings.

The prince answered with so little reserve, or rather with so much warmth, that the sultan, enraged

to see himself thwarted by him in full council, exclaimed, How, unnatural son! have you the insolence to talk thus to your father and sultan? He ordered the guards to take him away, and carry him to an old tower that had been long unoccupied; where he was shut up, with only a bed, a little furniture, some books, and one slave to attend him.

Kummir al Zummaun, thus deprived of liberty, was nevertheless pleased that he had the freedom to converse with his books, which made him regard his confinement with indifference. In the evening he bathed and said his prayers; and after having read some chapters in the Koraun, with the same tranquillity of mind as if he had been in the sultan's palace, he undressed himself and went to bed, leaving his lamp burning by him while he slept.

In this tower was a well[3], which served in the daytime for a retreat to a certain fairy, named Maimoune, daughter of Damriat, king or head of a legion of genies. It was about midnight when Maimoune sprung lightly to the mouth of the well, to wander about the world after her wonted custom, where her curiosity led her. She was surprised to see a light in the prince's chamber. She entered, and without stopping at the slave who lay at the door, approached the bed.

The prince had but half covered his face with the bed-clothes, which Maimoune lifted up, and per-

ceived the finest young man she had ever seen in her rambles through the world. What beauty, or rather what prodigy of beauty, said she within herself, must this youth appear, when the eyes, concealed by such well-formed eyelids, shall be open? What crime can he have committed, that a man of his high rank can deserve to be treated thus rigorously? for she had already heard his story, and could hardly believe it.

She could not forbear admiring the prince, till at length having kissed him gently on both cheeks, and in the middle of the forehead, without waking him, she laid the bed-clothes in the order they were in before, and took her flight into the air. As she was ascending into the middle region, she heard a great flapping of wings, towards which she directed her course; and when she approached, she knew it was a genie who made the noise, but it was one of those that are rebellious against God. As for Maimoune, she belonged to that class whom the great Solomon had compelled to acknowledge him.

This genie, whose name was Danhasch, and son of Schamhourasch, knew Maimoune, and was seized with fear, being sensible how much power she had over him by her submission to the Almighty. He would fain have avoided her, but she was so near him, he must either fight or yield. He therefore broke silence first.

Brave Maimoune, said he, in the tone of a sup-

pliant, swear to me in the name of the great God, that you will not hurt me; and I swear also on my part not to do you any harm.

Cursed genie, replied Maimoune, what hurt canst thou do me? I fear thee not; but I will grant thee this favour; I will swear not to do thee any harm. Tell me then, wandering spirit, whence thou comest, what thou hast seen, and what thou hast done this night? Fair lady, answered Danhasch, you meet me in a good time to hear something very wonderful.

The sultaness Scheherazade could proceed no farther with her story, because day-light began to appear, but the night following she resumed it as follows.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FOURTEENTH NIGHT.

DANHASCH, the genie rebellious against God, proceeded and said to Maimoune, Since you desire, I will inform you that I have come from the utmost limits of China, which comprise the remotest islands of this hemisphere . . . . . But, charming Maimoune, said Danhasch, who trembled with fear at the sight of this fairy, so that he could hardly speak, promise me at least you will forgive me, and let me proceed after I have satisfied your request.

Go on, cursed spirit, replied Maimoune; go on, and fear nothing. Dost thou think I am as perfidious as thyself, and capable of breaking the solemn oath I have made? Be sure you relate nothing but what is true, or I shall clip thy wings, and treat thee as thou deservest.

Danhasch, a little encouraged by the words of Maimoune, said, My dear lady, I will tell you nothing but what is strictly true, if you will but have the goodness to hear me. The country of China, from whence I come, is one of the largest and most powerful kingdoms of the earth, on which depend the remotest islands of this hemisphere, as I have already told you. The king of this country is at

present Gaioùr, who has an only daughter, the finest woman that ever was seen in the world since it has been a world. Neither you nor I, neither your class nor mine, nor all our respective genies, have expressions forcible enough, nor eloquence sufficient to convey an adequate description of her charms. Her hair is brown, and of such length as to trail on the ground; and so thick, that when she has fastened it in buckles on her head, it may be fitly compared to one of those fine clusters of grapes whose fruit is so very large. Her forehead is as smooth as the best polished mirror, and admirably formed. Her eyes are black, sparkling, and full of fire. Her nose is neither too long nor too short, and her mouth small and of a vermilion colour. Her teeth are like two rows of pearls, and surpass the finest in whiteness. When she moves her tongue to speak, she utters a sweet and most agreeable voice; and expresses herself in such terms, as sufficiently indicate the vivacity of her wit. The whitest alabaster is not fairer than her neck. In a word, by this imperfect sketch, you may guess there is no beauty likely to exceed her in the world.

Any one that did not know the king, the father, of this incomparable princess, would be apt to imagine, from the great respect and kindness he shews her, that he was enamoured with her. Never did a

lover more for the most beloved mistress than he has been seen to do for her. The most violent jealousy never suggested such measures as his care has led him to adopt, to keep her from every one but the man who is to marry her: and that the retreat in which he has resolved to place her may not seem irksome, he has built for her seven palaces, the most extraordinary and magnificent that ever were known.

The first palace is of rock crystal, the second of brass, the third of fine steel, the fourth of another kind of brass more valuable than the former and also than steel, the fifth of touchstone, the sixth of silver, and the seventh of massy gold. He has furnished these palaces most sumptuously, each in a manner corresponding to the materials of the structure. He has embellished the gardens with parterres of grass and flowers, intermixed with pieces of water, water-works, jets-d'eau, canals, cascades, and several great groves of trees, where the eye is lost in the perspective, and where the sun never enters, and all differently arranged. King Gaiour, in a word, has shewn that his paternal love has led him to spare no expence.

Upon the fame of this incomparable princess's beauty, the most powerful neighbouring kings have sent ambassadors to solicit her in marriage. The king of China received them all in the same obliging

manner; but as he resolved not to marry his daughter without her consent, and she did not like any of the parties, the ambassadors were forced to return as they came, as to the subject of their embassy; they were perfectly satisfied with the great honours and civilities they had received.

Sir, said the princess to the king her father, you have an inclination to see me married, and think to oblige me by it; but where shall I find such stately palaces and delicious gardens as are furnished me by your majesty? Through your good pleasure I am under no constraint, and have the same honours shewn to me as are paid to yourself. These are advantages I cannot expect to find any where else, whoever may be my husband; men love to be masters, and I have no inclination to be commanded.

After several other embassies on the same occasion, there arrived one from a king more opulent and powerful than any of the preceding. This prince the king of China recommended to his daughter for her husband, urging many forcible arguments to shew how much it would be to her advantage to accept him, but she intreated her father to excuse her compliance for the reasons she had before urged. He pressed her; but instead of consenting, she lost all the respect due to the king her father: Sir, said she, in anger, talk to me no more of this or any other match, unless you would

have me plunge this poniard in my bosom, to deliver myself from your importunities.

The king, greatly enraged, said, Daughter, you are mad, and I must treat you accordingly. In a word, he had her shut up in a single apartment of one of his palaces, and allowed her only ten old women to wait upon her, and keep her company, the chief of whom had been her nurse. That the kings his neighbours, who had sent embassies to him on her account, might not think any more of her, he despatched envoys to them severally, to let them know how averse his daughter was to marriage; and as he did not doubt but she was really mad, he charged them to make known in every court, that if there were any physician that would undertake to cure her, he should, if he succeeded, have her for his pains.

Fair Maimoune, continued Danhasch, all that I have told you is true; and I have gone every day regularly to contemplate this incomparable beauty, to whom I would be sorry to do the least harm, notwithstanding my natural inclination to mischief. Come and see her, I conjure you; it would be well worth your while. When you have seen from your own observation that I am no liar, I am persuaded you will think yourself obliged to me for the sight of a princess unequalled in beauty.

Instead of answering Danhasch, Maimoune burst

out into violent laughter, which lasted for some time; and Danhasch, not knowing what might be the occasion of it, was astonished beyond measure. When she had done laughing, she exclaimed, Good, good, very good! You would have me then believe all you have told me? I thought you designed to tell me something surprising and extraordinary, and you have been talking all this while of a mad woman. Fie, fie! what would you say, cursed genie, if you had seen the beautiful prince from whom I am just come, and whom I love as he deserves. I am confident you would soon give up the contest, and not pretend to compare your choice with mine.

Agreeable Maimoune, replied Danhasch, may I presume to ask who this prince you speak of is? Know, answered Maimoune, the same thing has happened to him as to your princess. The king his father would have married him against his will; but after much importunity, he frankly told him he would have nothing to do with a wife. For this reason he is at this moment imprisoned in an old tower where I reside.

I will not absolutely contradict you, replied Danhasch; but, my pretty lady, you must give me leave to be of opinion, till I have seen your prince, that no mortal upon earth can equal my princess in beauty. Hold thy tongue, cursed sprite, replied Maimoune. I tell thee once more thou art wrong.

I will not contend with you, said Danhasch, but the way to be convinced, whether what I say be true or false, is to accept of my proposal to go and see my princess, and after that I will go with you to your prince.

There is no need I should be at so much trouble, replied Maimoune; there is another way to satisfy us both; and that is, for you to bring your princess, and place her at my prince's bed-side: by this means it will be easy for us to compare them together, and determine the dispute.

Danhasch consented, and determined to set out immediately for China. But Maimoune drew him aside, and told him, she must first shew him the tower whither he was to bring the princess. They flew together to the tower, and when Maimoune had shewn it to Danhasch, she cried, Go fetch your princess, and do it quickly, you will find me here.

The day beginning to appear, Scheherazade was forced to leave off: but she resumed her narrative the night following, and said to the sultan of the Indies—

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH NIGHT.

DANHASCH left Maimoune, and flew towards China, whence he soon returned with incredible speed, bringing the fair princess along with him asleep. Maimoune received him, and introduced him into the chamber of Kummir al Zummaun, where they placed the princess by the prince's side.

When the prince and princess were thus laid together, there arose a sharp contest between the genie and the fairy about the preference of their beauty. They were some time admiring and comparing them without speaking; at length Danhasch said to Maimoune, You see, and I have already told you, my princess was handsomer than your prince; now, I hope, you are convinced.

How! convinced! replied Maimoune; I am not convinced, and you must be blind, if you connot see that my prince excels in the comparison. That the princess is fair, I do not deny; but if you compare them together without prejudice, you will soon see the difference.

How much soever I may compare them, returned Danhasch, I shall never change my opinion. I saw at first sight what I now behold, and time will not make me see differently: however, this shall not

hinder my yielding to you, charming Maimoune, if you desire it. What! have you yield to me as a favour! I scorn it, said Maimoune, I would not receive a favour at the hand of such a wicked genie. I will refer the matter to an umpire, and if you do not consent, I shall win by your refusal.

Danhasch, who was ready to have shewn a different kind of complaisance, no sooner gave his consent, than Maimoune stamped with her foot. The earth opened, and out came a hideous, hump-backed, squinting, and lame genie, with six horns upon his head, and claws on his hands and feet. As soon as he was come out, and the earth had closed, perceiving Maimoune, he threw himself at her feet, and then rising on one knee, enquired her commands.

Rise, Caschcasch, said Maimoune, I brought you hither to determine a difference between me and this cursed Danhasch. Look on that bed, and tell me without partiality who is the handsomer of those two that lie there asleep, the young man or the young lady.

Caschcasch looked on the prince and princess with great attention, admiration, and surprise; and after he had considered them a good while, without being able to determine, he turned to Maimoune, and said, Madam, I must confess I should deceive you, and betray myself, if I pretended to say one was handsomer than the other. The more I examine

them, the more clearly it appears to me each possesses, in a sovereign degree, the beauty of which both partake. Neither of them appears to have the least defect, to yield to the other the palm of superiority: but if there be any difference, the best way to determine it is, to awaken them one after the other, and to agree that the person who shall express most love for the other by ardour, eagerness, and passion, shall be deemed to have in some respect less beauty.

This proposal of Caschcasch's pleased both Maimoune and Danhasch. Maimoune then changed herself into a flea, and leaping on the prince's neck, stung him so smartly, that he awoke, and put up his hand to the place; but Maimoune skipped away, and resumed her pristine form, which, like those of the two genies, was invisible, the better to observe what he would do.

In drawing back his hand, the prince chanced to let it fall on that of the princess of China. He opened his eyes, and was exceedingly surprised to find lying by him a lady of the greatest beauty. He raised his head, and leaned on his elbow, the better to observe her. Her blooming youth and incomparable beauty fired him in a moment with a flame of which he had never yet been sensible, and from which he had hitherto guarded himself with the greatest attention.

Love seized on his heart in the most lively man-

ner, and he exclaimed, What beauty! what charms! my heart! my soul! As he spoke he kissed her forehead, her cheeks, and her mouth, with so little caution, that he would have awakened her, had she not slept sounder than ordinary, through the inchantment of Danhasch.

How! said the prince, do you not awake at these testimonies of love? He was going to awake her, but suddenly refrained. Is not this she, said he, that the sultan my father would have had me marry? He was in the wrong not to let me see her sooner. I should not have offended him by my disobedience and passionate language to him in public, and he would have spared himself the confusion which I have occasioned him.

The prince began to repent sincerely of the fault he had committed, and was once more on the point of awaking the princess of China. It may be, said he, that the sultan my father has a mind to surprise me; and has sent this young lady to try if I had really that aversion to marriage which I pretended. Who knows but he has brought her himself, and is hidden behind the hangings, to observe me, and make me ashamed of my dissimulation? This second fault would be greater than the first. At all events, I will content myself with this ring, as a remembrance of her.

He then gently drew off a ring which the princess

had on her finger, and immediately replaced it with one of his own. After this he fell into a more profound sleep than before, through the inchantment of the genies.

Danhasch now transformed himself into a flea in his turn, and bit the princess so rudely on the lip, that she awoke, started up, and on opening her eyes, was not a little surprised to see a man lying by her side. From surprise she proceeded to admiration, and from admiration to a transport of joy, at beholding so beautiful and lovely a youth.

What! cried she, is it you the king my father has designed me for a husband? Would that I had known it, for then I should not have displeased him, nor been deprived of a husband whom I cannot forbear loving. Wake then, awake!

So saying, she took the prince by the arm, and shook him so violently, that he would have awaked, had not Maimoune increased his sleep by her inchantment. She shook him several times, and finding he did not awake, exclaimed, What is come to thee? what jealous rival, envying thy happiness and mine, has had recourse to magic to throw thee into this unconquerable drowsiness when thou shouldst be most awake? Tired at length with her fruitless endeavours to awaken the prince; Since, said she, I find it is not in my power to awake thee, I will no longer disturb thy repose, but wait our next meeting.

After having kissed his cheek, she lay down and fell asleep by inchantment.

Maimoune now cried out to Danhasch, Ah, cursed genie, art thou not now convinced how much thy princess is inferior to my prince? Another time believe me when I assert any thing. Then turning to Caschcasch, As for you, said she, I thank you for your trouble; take the princess, in conjunction with Danhasch, and convey her back again to her bed, *from* whence he has taken her. Danhasch and Caschcasch did as they were commanded, and Maimoune retired to her well.

The day beginning to appear, imposed silence on Scheherazade; the next night she continued her story as follows.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTEENTH NIGHT.

KUMMIR al Zummaun on waking next morning, looked if the lady whom he had seen the night before were by him. When he found she was gone, he cried out, I thought indeed this was a trick the king my father designed to play me. I am glad I was aware of it. He then awaked the slave, who was still asleep, and after he had washed and said his prayers, took a book and read some time.

After these usual exercises, he called the slave, and said to him, Come hither, and be sure you do not tell me a lie. How came the lady hither who lay with me to-night, and who brought her?

My lord, answered the slave with great astonishment, I know not what lady your highness speaks of. I speak, said the prince, of her who came, or rather was brought hither, and lay with me to-night. My lord, replied the slave, I swear I know of no such lady; and how should she come in without my knowledge, since I lay at the door?

You are a lying knave, replied the prince, and in the plot to vex and provoke me. He then gave him a box on the ear, which knocked him down; and after having stamped upon him for some time, he tied the well-rope under his arms, and plunged him

several times into the water, neck and heels. I will drown thee, cried he, if thou dost not tell me directly who this lady was, and who brought her.

The slave, perplexed and half dead, said within himself, The prince must have lost his senses through grief, and I shall not escape if I do not tell him a falsehood. My lord, cried he, in a suppliant tone, I beseech your highness to spare my life, and I will tell you the truth.

The prince drew the slave up, and pressed him to tell him. As soon as he was out of the well, My lord, said he, trembling, your highness must perceive it is impossible for me to satisfy you in my present condition; I beg you to give me leave first to go and change my clothes. I permit you, but do it quickly, said the prince; and be sure you conceal nothing.

The slave went out, and having locked the door upon the prince, ran to the palace just as he was. The king was at that time in discourse with his prime vizier, to whom he had just related the grief in which he had passed the night on account of his son's disobedience and opposition to his will.

The minister endeavoured to comfort his master, by telling him, the prince himself had given him cause for his severity. Sir, said he, your majesty need not repent of having treated your son in this manner. Have but patience to let him continue a

while in prison, and assure yourself his heat will abate, and he will submit to all you require.

The grand vizier had but just done speaking when the slave came in, and cast himself at the feet of the sovereign. My lord, said he, I am sorry to be the messenger of ill news to your majesty, which I know must occasion you fresh affliction. The prince is distracted; he raves of a lady having lain with him all night, and his treatment of me, as you may see, too plainly proves the state of his mind. Then he proceeded to relate the particulars of what the prince had said, and the violence with which he had been treated.

The king, who did not expect to hear any thing of this afflicting kind, said to the prime minister, This is a melancholy turn, very different from the hopes you gave me: go immediately and examine the condition of my son.

The grand vizier obeyed; and coming into the prince's chamber, found him sitting on his bed with a book in his hand, which he was reading.

After mutual salutations, the vizier said, My lord, I wish that a slave of yours were punished for coming to alarm the king your father by news that he has brought him.

What is it, demanded the prince, that could give my father so much uneasiness?

Prince, answered the vizier, God forbid that the

intelligence he has conveyed to your father concerning you should be true; indeed, I find it to be false, by the calm temper in which I observe you, and which I pray you to continue. It may be, replied the prince, he did not make himself well understood; but since you are come, who ought to know something of the matter, permit me to ask you who that lady was that lay with me last night?

The grand vizier was thunderstruck at this question; he recovered himself and said, My lord, be not surprised at my astonishment at your question. Is it possible, that a lady or any other person should penetrate by night into this place, without entering at the door, and walking over the body of your slave? I beseech you, recollect yourself, and you will find it is only a dream which has made this impression on you.

I give no ear to what you say, replied the prince, raising his voice. I must know from you absolutely what is become of the lady; and if you hesitate, I am in a place where I shall soon be able to force you to obey me.

At this stern language, the grand vizier began to feel more alarmed than before, and to think how he could extricate himself. He endeavoured to pacify the prince, and begged of him, in the most humble and guarded manner, to tell him if he had seen this lady?

Yes, yes, answered the prince, I have seen her, and am very well satisfied you sent her here to tempt me. She played the part in which you had instructed her admirably well. She pretended to be asleep, and I had no sooner fallen into a slumber, than she arose and left me. You know all this; for I doubt not she has been to make her report to you.

My lord, replied the vizier, I swear to you nothing of this kind has been acted; neither your father nor I sent this lady you speak of; permit me therefore once more to suggest to your highness, that you have only seen this lady in a dream.

Do you come to affront and contradict me, said the prince in a rage, and to tell me to my face, that what I have told you is a dream? At the same time he took him by the beard, and loaded him with blows, as long as he could stand.

The grand vizier endured with respectful patience all the violence of the prince's indignation, and could not help saying within himself, Now am I in as bad a condition as the slave, and shall think myself happy, if I can, like him, escape from any further danger. In the midst of repeated blows, he cried out but for a moment's audience, which the prince, after he had nearly tired himself with beating him, consented to give him.

I own, my prince, said the grand vizier dissembling, there is something in what your highness sus-

pects; but you cannot be ignorant of the necessity a minister is under to obey his royal master's commands: yet, if you will but be pleased to set me at liberty, I will go and tell him any thing on your behalf that you shall think fit to require. Go then, said the prince, and tell him from me, if he pleases, I will marry the lady he sent me, or, rather, that was brought to me last night. Do this immediately, and bring me a speedy answer. The grand vizier made a profound reverence and went away, not thinking himself altogether safe till he had got out of the tower, and had closed the door on the prince.

He came and presented himself before Shaw Zummaun, with a countenance that sufficiently shewed he had been ill used, and which the king could not behold without concern. Well, said the king, in what condition did you find my son? Sir, answered the vizier, what the slave reported to your majesty is but too true. He then began to relate his interview with the prince, how he flew into a passion upon his endeavouring to persuade him it was impossible the lady he spoke of should have been introduced; the ill treatment he had received from him; how he had used him, and by what means he had made his escape.

The king, the more concerned as he loved the prince with excessive tenderness, resolved to find out the truth, and therefore proposed to go himself

and see his son in the tower, accompanied by the grand vizier.

Here the sultaness stopped, perceiving that day began to appear.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTEENTH NIGHT.

THE prince received his father in the tower, where he was confined, with great respect. The king put several questions to him, which he answered calmly. The king every now and then looked on the grand vizier, as intimating he did not find his son had lost his wits, but rather thought he had lost his.

The king at length spoke of the lady to the prince. My son, said he, I desire you to tell me what lady it was who lay with you last night.

Sir, answered the prince, I beg of your majesty not to give me more vexation on that head, but rather to oblige me by letting me have her in marriage; whatever aversion I may hitherto have discovered for women, this young lady has charmed me to that degree, that I cannot help confessing my weakness. I am ready to receive her at your majesty's hands, with the deepest gratitude.

Shaw Zummaun was surprised at this answer of the prince, so remote, as he thought, from the good sense he had shewn before. My son, said he, you fill me with the greatest astonishment by what you say: I swear to you I know nothing of the lady you mention; and if any such has come to you, it was without my knowledge or privity. But how could

she get into this tower without my consent? For whatever my grand vizier told you, it was only to appease your anger, it must therefore be a mere dream; and I beg of you not to believe otherwise, but recover your senses.

Sir, replied the prince, I should be for ever unworthy of your majesty's favour, if I did not give entire credit to what you are pleased to say; but I humbly beseech you at the same time to give a patient hearing to what I shall relate, and then to judge whether what I have the honour to tell you be a dream or not.

The prince then related to his father how he had been awaked, exaggerating the beauty and charms of the lady he found by his side, the instantaneous love he conceived for her, and the pains he took to awaken her without effect. Shewing the king the ring he had taken from her finger, he added, After this, I hope you will be convinced that I have not lost my senses, as you have been almost made to believe.

Shaw Zummaun was so perfectly convinced of the truth of what his son had been telling him, that he could make no reply, remaining astonished for some time, and not being able to utter a syllable.

The prince took advantage of this opportunity, and said, The passion I have conceived for this charming lady, whose lovely image I bear continu-

ally in my mind, is so ardent, that I cannot resist it. I intreat you therefore to have compassion, and procure me the happiness of being united to her.

Son, replied the king, after what I have just heard, and what I see by the ring on your finger, I cannot doubt but that your passion is real, and that you have seen this lady, who is the object of it. Would to God I knew who she was. I would instantly comply with your wishes, and should be the happiest father in the world! But where shall I seek her? How came she here, and by what conveyance, without my consent? Why did she come to sleep with you only to display her beauty, to kindle a flame of love while she slept, and then leave you while you were in a slumber? These things, I must confess, I do not understand; and if heaven do not favour us in our perplexity, I fear we must both go down to the grave together. As he spoke, he took the prince by the hand, and said, Come then, my son, let us go and grieve together; you with hopeless love, and I with seeing your affliction, without being able to afford you relief.

Shaw Zummaun then led his son out of the tower, and conveyed him to the palace, where he had no sooner arrived, than in despair at loving an unknown object he fell sick, and took to his bed; the king shut himself up with him, without attending to the affairs of his kingdom for many days.

The prime minister, who was the only person that had admittance, at length informed him, that the whole court, and even the people, began to murmur at not seeing him, and that he did not administer justice every day as he was wont to do[4]; adding, he knew not what disorder it might occasion. I humbly beg your majesty, therefore, proceeded he, to pay some attention. I am sensible your majesty's company is a great comfort to the prince, and that his tends to relieve your grief; but you must not run the risk of letting all be lost. Permit me to propose to your majesty, to remove with the prince to the castle near the port, where you may give audience to your subjects twice a week only. During these absences the prince will be so agreeably amused with the beauty, prospect, and good air of the place, that he will bear them with the less uneasiness.

The king approved this proposal: he removed thither with the prince; and, excepting when he gave audience, never left him, but passed all his time endeavouring to comfort him by sharing his distress.

Whilst matters passed thus in the capital of Shaw Zummaun, the two genies, Danhasch and Caschcasch, had carried the princess of China back to the palace where the king her father had confined her, and laid her in her bed as before.

When she awoke next morning, and found that prince Kummir al Zummaun was not by her, she cried out in such a manner to her women, that she soon brought them to her bed. Her nurse, who arrived first, desired to be informed if any thing disagreeable had happened to her.

Tell me, said the princess, what is become of the young man that has passed the night with me, and whom I love with all my soul? Madam, replied the nurse, we cannot understand your highness, unless you will be pleased to explain yourself.

A young man, the handsomest and most amiable, said the princess, slept with me last night, whom, with all my caresses, I could not awake; I ask you where he is?

Madam, answered the nurse, your highness asks us these questions in jest. I beseech you to rise. I am in earnest, said the princess, and I must know where this young man is. Madam, insisted the nurse, you were alone when you went to bed last night; and how any man could come to you without our knowledge we cannot imagine, for we all lay about the door of your chamber, which was locked, and I had the key in my pocket.

At this the princess lost all patience, and taking her nurse by the hair of her head, and giving her two or three sound cuffs, cried, You shall tell me

where this young man is, you old sorceress, or I will put you to death.

The nurse struggled to get from her, and at last succeeded. She went immediately with tears in her eyes, and her face all bloody, to complain to the queen, who was not a little surprised to see her in this condition, and asked who had misused her.

Madam, began the nurse, you see how the princess has treated me; she had certainly murdered me, if I had not had the good fortune to escape out of her hands. She then related what had been the cause of all that violent passion in the princess. The queen was surprised at her account, and could not guess how she came to be so infatuated as to take that for a reality which could be no other than a dream. Your majesty must conclude from all this, continued the nurse, that the princess is out of her senses. You will think so yourself if you will go and see her.

The queen's affection for the princess deeply interested her in what she heard; she ordered the nurse to follow her; and they immediately went together to the princess's palace.

The sultaness Scheherazade would have gone on, but perceiving day-light appear, she deferred what she had to say farther till the next night, when she proceeded.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH NIGHT.

THE queen of China sat down by her daughter's bed-side on her arrival in her apartment, and after she had informed herself about her health, began to ask her what had made her so angry with her nurse, as to treat her in the manner she had done. Daughter, said she, this is not right, and a great princess like you should not suffer herself to be so transported by passion.

Madam, replied the princess, I plainly perceive your majesty is come to mock me; but I declare I will never let you rest till you consent to my marrying the young man who lay with me last night. You must know where he is, and therefore I beg of your majesty to let him come to me again.

Daughter, answered the queen, you surprise me; I do not understand your meaning. The princess now forgot all respect for the queen; Madam, replied she, the king my father and you have persecuted me about marrying, when I had no inclination; I now have an inclination, and I will have this young man I told you of for my husband, or I will destroy myself.

The queen endeavoured to calm the princess by conciliatory language: Daughter, said she, you know well you are guarded in this apartment, how

then could any man come to you? But instead of attending to her, the princess interrupted her, by such extravagancies as obliged the queen to leave her, and retire in great affliction, to inform the king of all that had passed.

When the king had heard the account, he wished likewise to be satisfied in person, and coming to his daughter's apartment, asked her, if what he had been told was true? Sir, replied the princess, let us talk no more of that; I only beseech your majesty to grant me the favour, that I may marry the young man I lay with last night.

What! daughter, said the king, has any one lain with you last night? How, sir, replied the princess, without giving him time to go on, Do you ask me if any one lay with me last night? Your majesty knows that but too well. He was the most beautiful youth the sun ever saw: I ask him of you for my husband; I intreat you do not refuse me. But that your majesty may not longer doubt whether I have seen this young man, whether he has lain with me, whether I have caressed him, or whether I did not my utmost to awake him without succeeding, see, if you please, this ring. She then reached forth her hand, and shewed the king a man's ring on her finger. The king was perplexed what to think. He had confined his daughter as mad, he began now to think her more insane than ever. Without saying

any thing more to her, lest she might do violence to herself or somebody about her, he had her chained, and confined more closely than before, allowing her only the nurse to wait on her, with a good guard at the door.

The king, exceedingly concerned at this indisposition of his daughter, sought all possible means to effect her cure. He assembled his council, and after having acquainted them with her condition, If any of you, said he, is capable of undertaking to restore her to health, and succeed, I will give her to him in marriage, and make him heir to my dominions.

The desire of obtaining a handsome young princess, and the hopes of one day governing so great a kingdom as that of China, had a powerful effect on an emir, already advanced in years, who was present at this council. As he was well skilled in magic, he offered the king to recover his daughter, and flattered himself with success. I consent to the trial, said the king; but I forgot to tell you one condition, and that is, that if you do not succeed, you shall lose your head. It would not be reasonable you should have so great a reward, and yet run no risk: and what I say to you, continued the king, I say to all others who shall come after you, that they may consider beforehand what they undertake.

The emir accepted the condition, and the king conducted him to the princess's place of confine-

ment. She covered her face as soon as she saw them enter, and exclaimed, Your majesty surprises me, in bringing with you a man whom I do not know, and by whom my religion forbids me to let myself be seen. Daughter, replied the king, you need not be scandalized, it is only one of my emirs who is come to demand you in marriage. It is not, I perceive, the person that you have already given me, and whose faith is plighted by the ring I wear, replied the princess; be not offended that I will never marry any other.

The emir expected the princess would have said or done some extravagant thing, and was not a little disappointed when he heard her talk so calmly and rationally; for he then concluded that her disease was nothing but a violent and deep-rooted passion. He therefore threw himself at his majesty's feet, and said, After what I have heard and observed, sir, it will be to no purpose for me to think of curing the princess, since I have no remedies proper for her malady; for which reason I humbly submit my life to your majesty's pleasure. The king, enraged at his incapacity, and the trouble he had given him, caused him to be immediately beheaded.

Some days after, unwilling to have it said that he had neglected his daughter's cure, the king put forth a proclamation in his capital, importing, that if there were any physician, astrologer, or magician,

who would undertake to restore the princess to her senses, he needed only to offer himself, and he should be employed, on condition of losing his head if he failed. He had the same published in the other principal cities and towns of his dominions, and in the courts of the princes his neighbours.

The first that presented himself was an astrologer and magician, whom the king caused to be conducted to the princess's prison by an eunuch. The astrologer drew forth, out of a bag he carried under his arm, an astrolabe, a small sphere, a chafing-dish, several sorts of drugs proper for fumigations, a brass pot, with many other articles, and desired he might have a fire.

The princess demanded what all these preparations were for? Madam, answered the eunuch, they are to exorcise the evil spirit that possesses you, to shut him up in this pot, and throw him into the sea.

Foolish astrologer, replied the princess, I have no occasion for any of your preparations, but am in my perfect senses, and you alone are mad. If your art can bring him I love to me, I shall be obliged to you; otherwise you may go about your business, for I have nothing to do with you. Madam, said the astrologer, if your case be so, I shall desist from all endeavours, believing the king your father only can remove your disorder: so putting up his trinkets

again, he marched away, much concerned that he had so easily undertaken to cure an imaginary malady.

The eunuch conducted the astrologer to the king, whom the astrologer thus addressed: According to what your majesty published in your proclamation, and what you were pleased to confirm to me yourself, I thought the princess was insane, and depended on being able to recover her by the secrets I have long been acquainted with; but I soon found she had no other disease but that of love, over which my art has no power: your majesty alone is the physician who can cure her, by giving her in marriage the person whom she desires.

The king was much enraged at the astrologer, and had his head instantly cut off. Not to fatigue your majesty with repetitions, continued Scheherazade to the sultan, I will acquaint you in a few words, that a hundred and fifty astrologers, physicians, and magicians, came on this account, who all underwent the same fate; and their heads were set upon poles on every gate of the city.

The princess of China's nurse, proceeded the sultaness, had a son whose name was Marzavan, who had been foster-brother to the princess, and brought up with her. Their friendship was so great during their childhood, and all the time they had been together, that as they grew up, even some

time after their separation, they treated each other as brother and sister.

Marzavan, among other studies, had from his youth been much addicted to judicial astrology, geomancy, and the like secret arts, wherein he became exceedingly skilful. Not satisfied with what he had learned from masters, he travelled, and there was hardly any person of note in any science or art, but he sought him in the most remote cities, to obtain information, so great was his thirst after knowledge.

After several years absence in foreign parts, he returned to the capital of his native country, where, seeing so many heads on the gate by which he entered, he was exceedingly surprised, and demanded for what reason they had been placed there; but he more particularly enquired after the princess his foster-sister. As he could not receive an answer to one inquiry without the other, he heard at length a general account of what had happened, and waited for farther particulars till he could see his mother, the princess's nurse.

Here Scheherazade left off, seeing the day appear, but resumed her narrative the night following.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH NIGHT.

ALTHOUGH the nurse, the mother of Marzavan, was much employed about the princess, yet she no sooner heard her son was returned, than she found time to come out, embrace him, and converse with him a little. Having told him, with tears in her eyes, the unhappy condition of the princess, and for what reason the king her father had confined her; her son desired to know if she could not procure him a private view of her royal mistress, without the king's knowledge. After some pause, she told him she could give him no answer for the present; but if he would meet her the next day at the same hour, she would inform him.

The nurse knowing none could approach the princess but herself, without leave of the eunuch, who commanded the guard at the gate, addressed herself to him, and said, You know I have brought up and suckled the princess, and you may likewise have heard that I had a daughter whom I brought up along with her. This daughter has been since married, yet the princess still does her the honour to love her, and wishes to see her, without any person's observing her enter or depart.

The nurse was proceeding, but the eunuch in-

terrupted her and exclaimed, Say no more, I will with pleasure do any thing to oblige the princess; go and fetch your daughter, or send for her about midnight, and the gate shall be open for you.

As soon as it was dark, the nurse went to Marzavan, and having dressed him so well in women's clothes, that nobody could suspect he was a man, carried him along with her; and the eunuch believing it was her daughter, admitted them.

The nurse, before she presented Marzavan, went to the princess, and said, Madam, this is not a woman I have brought to you, it is my son Marzavan in disguise, newly arrived from his travels; having a great desire to kiss your hand, I hope your highness will vouchsafe him that honour.

What! my brother Marzavan, exclaimed the princess, with great joy; approach, and take off that veil; for it is not unreasonable that a brother and a sister should see each other without covering their faces.

Marzavan saluted her with profound respect, while, without giving him time to speak, she continued, I rejoice to see you returned in good health, after so many years absence, and without sending any account of your welfare, even to your good mother.

Madam, replied Marzavan, I am infinitely obliged to your goodness. I hoped to have heard a better

account of your health than has been given me, and which I lament to find confirmed by your appearance. It gives me pleasure, however, to have come so seasonably to bring your highness that remedy which your situation requires. Should I reap no other benefit from my studies and travels, I should think myself amply recompensed.

Having thus spoken, Marzavan drew out of his pocket a book and some other things, which from the account he had had from his mother of the princess's distemper, he thought he might want. The princess, observing these preparations, exclaimed, What! brother, are you one of those who believe me mad? Undeceive yourself, and hear me.

The princess then related to Marzavan all the particulars of her story, without omitting the least circumstance, even to the ring which was exchanged for hers, and which she shewed him. I have not concealed the least incident from you, continued she; there is something in this business which I cannot comprehend, and which has given occasion for some persons to think me mad. But no one will attend to the rest, which is literally as I have stated.

After the princess had concluded, Marzavan, filled with wonder and astonishment, remained for some time with his eyes fixed on the ground, without speaking a word; but at length he lifted up his head and said, If it be as your highness says, and

which I do not in the least doubt, I do not despair of being able to procure you the gratification of your wishes. But I must first intreat your highness to arm yourself with patience, till I have travelled over kingdoms which I have not yet visited, and when you hear of my return, be assured the object of your desire is not far distant. Having thus spoken, Marzavan took leave of the princess, and set out the next morning on his intended travels.

He journeyed from city to city, from province to province, and from island to island; and in every place he visited, he could hear of nothing but the princess Badoura[5] (which was the princess of China's name) and her history.

About four months after, our traveller arrived at Torf, a sea-port town, large and populous, where the theme was changed; he no more heard of the princess Badoura, but all the talk was of prince Kummir al Zummaun, who was sick, and whose history greatly resembled hers. Marzavan was extremely delighted on hearing this, and informed himself where the prince was to be found. There were two ways to it; one, by land and sea; the other, by sea only; which was the shortest.

Mazavan chose the latter; and embarking on board a merchant ship, arrived safely in sight of Shaw Zummaun's capital; but just before it entered the port, the ship struck upon a rock, by the un-

skilfulness of the pilot, and foundered: it went down in sight of the castle, where at that time were the king and his grand vizier.

Marzavan, who could swim well, immediately upon the ship's sinking, cast himself into the sea, and got safe on shore under the castle, where he was soon relieved by the grand vizier's order. After he had changed his clothes, and been well treated, he was introduced to the grand vizier, who had sent for him.

Marzavan being a young man of good address, the minister received him with great politeness; and was induced, from the just and pertinent answers he returned to the questions put to him, to regard him with great esteem. Finding by degrees that he possessed great variety and extent of information, he said to him, From what I can understand, I perceive you are no common man; you have travelled much: would to God you had discovered some remedy for a malady which has been long a source of great affliction at this court.

Marzavan replied, If he knew what malady it was, he might perhaps find a remedy applicable to it.

The grand vizier then related to him the story of prince Kummir al Zummaun. He concealed nothing relating to his birth which had been so earnestly desired, his education, the wish of the king his

father to see him early married, his resistance and extraordinary aversion from marriage, his disobeying his father in full council, his imprisonment, his extravagancies in prison, which were afterwards changed into a violent passion for some unknown lady, who, he pretended, had exchanged a ring with him, though, for his part, he verily believed there was no such person in the world.

Marzavan gave great attention to all the grand vizier said, and was infinitely rejoiced to find that, by means of his shipwreck, he had so fortunately lighted on the person he was seeking. He saw no reason to doubt that the prince was the man whom the princess of China so ardently loved, and that this princess was equally the object of his passion. Without explaining himself farther to the vizier, he desired to see the prince, that he might be better able to judge of his disorder and its cure. Follow me, said the grand vizier, and you will find the king with him, who has already desired I should introduce you.

On entering the prince's chamber, the first thing Marzavan observed was the prince upon his bed languishing, and with his eyes shut. Notwithstanding his condition, and regardless of the presence of the king his father, who was sitting by him, he could not avoid exclaiming, Heavens! was there ever a greater resemblance? He meant to the princess of

China; for it seems the princess and the prince were much alike.

This exclamation of Marzavan excited the prince's curiosity; he opened his eyes and looked at him. Marzavan, who had a ready wit, seized that opportunity, and made his compliment in extempore verse; but in such a disguised manner, that neither the king nor the grand vizier understood his meaning. He represented so exactly what had happened to him with the princess of China, that the prince had no reason to doubt he knew her, and could give him tidings of her. His countenance immediately brightened up with joy.

The sultaness had not time to proceed any farther that night, but on the following went on with her story.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTIETH NIGHT.

AFTER Marzavan had finished his compliment in verse, which surprised Kummir al Zummaun so agreeably, the prince took the liberty of making a sign to the king his father, to give his place to Marzavan, and allow him to sit by him.

The king, overjoyed at this alteration, which inspired him with hopes of his son's speedy recovery, quitted his place, and taking Marzavan by the hand, led him to it, obliging him to sit. He then demanded of him who he was, and whence he had come? And upon Marzavan's answering he was a subject of China, and came from that kingdom, the king exclaimed, Heaven grant you may be able to recover my son from this profound melancholy; I shall be eternally obliged to you, and all the world shall see how handsomely I will reward you. Having said thus, he left the prince to converse at full liberty with the stranger, whilst he went and rejoiced with the grand vizier on this happy incident.

Marzavan leaning down to the prince, addressed him in a low voice: Prince, it is time you should cease to grieve. The lady, for whom you suffer, is the princess Badoura, daughter of Gaiour[6], king of China. This I can assure your highness from what

she has told me of her adventure, and what I have learned of yours. She has suffered no less on your account than you have on hers. Here he related all that he knew of the princess's story, from the night of their extraordinary interview.

He omitted not to acquaint him how the king had treated those who had failed in their endeavours to cure the princess of her indisposition. But your highness is the only person, added he, that can cure her effectually, and you may present yourself without fear. However, before you undertake so long a voyage, I would have you perfectly recovered, and then we will take what measures may be necessary. Think then immediately of the recovery of your health.

This account had a marvellous effect on the prince. The hopes of speedily fulfilling his desires so much relieved him, that he felt he had strength sufficient to rise, and begged permission of his father to dress himself, with such an air as gave him incredible pleasure.

Shaw Zummaun, without inquiring into the means he had used to produce this wonderful effect, could not refrain from embracing Marzavan, and soon after went out of the prince's chamber with the grand vizier, to publish the agreeable tidings. He ordered public rejoicings for several days together, gave great largesses to his officers and the people, and

alms to the poor, and caused the prisoners to be set at liberty throughout his kingdom. The joy was soon general in the capital, and in every part of his dominions.

Kummir al Zummaun, though extremely weakened by almost continual privation of sleep and long abstinence, soon recovered his health. When he found himself in a condition to undertake the voyage, he took Marzavan aside, and said, Dear Marzavan, it is now time to perform the promise you have made me. My impatience to behold the charming princess, and to relieve her of the torments she is now suffering on my account, is such, that if we do not shortly depart, I shall relapse into my former indisposition. One thing still afflicts me, continued he, and that is the difficulty I shall find, from his tender affection for me, to obtain my father's permission to travel into a distant country. You observe he scarcely allows me to be a moment out of his sight.

At these words the prince wept. Marzavan then replied, I foresaw this difficulty, and I will take care it shall not obstruct us. My principal design in this voyage was to cure the princess of China of her malady, and this on account of the mutual affection which we have borne to each other from our birth, as well as from the zeal and affection I otherwise owe her. I should therefore be wanting in my duty to her, if I did not use my best endeavours to effect

her cure and yours. This is then the mode I have devised to obtain the king your father's consent. You have not stirred abroad for some time, therefore request his permission to go upon a hunting party with me. He will no doubt comply. When you have obtained his leave, order two fleet coursers for each of us to be got ready, one to mount, the other to change, and leave the rest to me.

The following day the prince did as he had been instructed. He acquainted the king he was desirous of taking the air, and, if he pleased, would go and hunt for two or three days with Marzavan. The king gave his consent, but wished him not to be absent more than one night, since too much exercise at first might impair his health, and a longer absence would make him uneasy. He then ordered him to choose the best horses in the royal stable, and took particular care that nothing should be wanting for his accommodation. When all was ready, he embraced the prince, and having recommended to Marzavan to be careful of him, he let him go. Kummir al Zummaun and Marzavan were soon mounted, when, to amuse the two grooms who led the spare horses, they made as if they were going to hunt, and under this pretence got as far from the city and out of the high road as was possible. When night began to approach, they alighted at a caravanserai or inn, where they supped, and slept till about

midnight; when Marzavan awakened the prince, and desired his highness to let him have his dress, and to take another for himself, which was brought in his baggage. Thus equipped, they mounted the fresh horses, and after Marzavan had taken one of the grooms' horses by the bridle, they left the caravanserai.

At day-break they found themselves in a forest, where four roads met. Here Marzavan, desiring the prince to wait for him a little, went into the wood. He then cut the throat of the groom's horse, and after having torn the suit which the prince had taken off, and besmeared it with blood, threw it into the highway.

The prince enquired his reason for what he had done. He replied, he was sure that when the king his father found he did not return, and should learn that he had departed without the grooms, he would suspect something wrong, and immediately send in quest of them. They who may come this way, finding this bloody habit, will conclude you are devoured by wild beasts, and that I have escaped to avoid the king's anger. The king, concluding you are dead, will stop further pursuit, and we may have leisure to continue our journey without fear of being followed. I must confess, continued Marzavan, it is a violent way of proceeding, to alarm a fond father with the death of his son, but his joy will be the

greater when he shall hear you are alive and happy. Brave Marzavan, replied the prince, I cannot but approve such an ingenious stratagem, or sufficiently admire your conduct: you place me under fresh obligations to you.

The prince and Marzavan being well provided for their expences, continued their journey both by land and sea, and found no other obstacle but the length of the time which it necessarily took up. They arrived at length at the capital of China, where Marzavan, instead of going to his house, carried the prince to a public inn. They remained there incognito three days, to rest themselves after the fatigue of the voyage; during which time Marzavan caused an astrologer's habit to be made for the prince. The three days being expired, they went together to the bath, where the prince put on his astrologer's dress: from thence Marzavan conducted him to the neighbourhood of the king of China's palace, where he left him, to go and inform his mother of his arrival.

The sultaness Scheherazade had scarcely uttered these words when she observed the day appear, which obliged her to silence; but the night following she continued thus.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIRST NIGHT.

KUMMIR al Zummaun, instructed by Marzavan what he was to do, came next morning to the gate of the king's palace, and cried aloud, I am an astrologer, and am come to cure the illustrious princess Badoura, daughter of the most high and mighty monarch Gaiour king of China, on the conditions proposed by his majesty, to marry her if I succeed, or else to lose my life for my fruitless and presumptuous attempt.

Besides the guards and porters at the gate, this incident drew together a great number of people about the prince. There had no physician, astrologer, or magician appeared for a long time on this account, being deterred by the many tragical examples of ill success that appeared before; it was therefore thought there remained no more of these professions in the world, or none so mad as those that had already forfeited their lives.

The prince's appearance, his noble air, and blooming youth, made every one who saw him pity him. What mean you, sir, said some that were nearest to him, thus to expose a life of such promising expectations to certain death? Cannot the

heads you see on all the gates of this city deter you from such an undertaking? In the name of God consider what you do! abandon this rash attempt, and depart.

The prince continued firm, notwithstanding all these remonstrances; and as he saw no one coming to introduce him, he repeated the same cry with a boldness that made every body tremble. They all then exclaimed, Let him alone, he is resolved to die; God have mercy on his youth and his soul! He then proceeded to cry a third time in the same manner, when the grand vizier came in person, and introduced him to the king of China.

As soon as the prince came into the presence, he bowed and kissed the ground. The king, who, among all that had hitherto presumptuously exposed their lives on this occasion, had not before seen one worthy of his attention, felt real compassion for Kummir al Zummaun, on account of the danger to which he exposed himself. Young man, said he, I can hardly believe that at this age you can have acquired experience enough to dare attempt the cure of my daughter. I wish you may succeed, and would give her to you in marriage with all my heart, and with the greatest joy, more willingly than I should have done to others that have offered themselves before you; but I must declare to you at the

same time, though with great concern, that if you fail, notwithstanding your noble appearance and your youth, you must lose your head.

Sir, replied the prince, I have infinite obligations to your majesty for the honour you design me, and the great goodness you shew to a stranger; but I desire your majesty to believe I would not have come from so remote a country as I have done, the name of which perhaps may be unknown in your dominions, if I had not been certain of the cure I propose. What would not the world say of my fickleness, if, after such great fatigues and so many dangers as I have undergone in the pursuit, I thould abandon this generous enterprise? Even your majesty would lose that esteem you have conceived for me. If I perish, I shall die with the satisfaction of not having forfeited your good opinion. I beseech your majesty therefore to keep me no longer from displaying the certainty of my art, by the proof I am ready to afford.

The king now commanded the eunuch, who had the custody of the princess, to introduce Kummir al Zummaun into her apartment: but before he would let him go, reminded him once more that he was at liberty to renounce his design; but the prince paid no regard to this, and with astonishing resolution and eagerness followed the eunuch.

When they had entered a long gallery, at the

end of which was the princess's apartment, the prince, who saw himself so near the object of his wishes, who had occasioned him so many tears, pushed on, and got before the eunuch.

The eunuch redoubling his pace, with difficulty got up with him. Whither so fast? cried he, taking him by the arm; you cannot get in without me; and it should seem you have a great desire for death, thus to run to it headlong. Not one of all those many astrologers and magicians I have introduced before made such haste as yourself, to a place whence I fear you will come but too soon.

Friend, replied the prince, looking earnestly on the eunuch, and continuing his pace, this was because none of the astrologers you speak of were so confident in their art as I am: they were certain indeed they should die, if they did not succeed, but they had no certainty of their success. On this account they had reason to tremble on approaching this spot, where I am sure to find my happiness. He had just spoken these words when he reached the door. The eunuch opened it, and introduced him into a great hall, whence was an entrance into the princess's apartment, divided from it only by a piece of tapestry.

The prince stopped before he entered, speaking more softly to the eunuch for fear of being heard by the princess. To convince you, said he, there

is neither presumption, nor whim, nor youthful conceit in my undertaking, I leave it to your choice whether I shall cure the princess in her presence, or where we are, without going any farther, or seeing her?

The eunuch was amazed to hear the prince talk to him with such confidence: he left off jeering, and said seriously to him, It is no matter where it is done, provided it be effected: cure her how you will, if you succeed you will gain immortal honour, not only in this court, but over all the world.

The prince replied, It will be best then to cure her without seeing her, that you may be witness of my skill; notwithstanding my impatience to see a princess of her rank, who is to be my wife, yet out of respect to you, I will deprive myself of that pleasure for a little while. Being furnished with every thing proper for an astrologer to carry about him, he took pen, ink, and paper out of his pocket, and wrote the following billet to the princess.

" The impassioned Kummir al Zummaun cannot recite the inexpressible pain he has endured since that fatal night in which your charms deprived him of the liberty which he had resolved to preserve. He only tells you that he devoted his heart to you in your charming slumbers; those obstinate slumbers which hindered him from beholding the brightness

of your piercing eyes, notwithstanding all his endeavours to oblige you to open them. He presumed to present you with his ring as a token of his passion; and to take yours in exchange, which he incloses. If you condescend to return his as a reciprocal pledge of love, he will esteem himself the happiest of mankind. If not, the sentence of death, which your refusal must draw upon him, will be received with resignation, since he will perish on account of his love for you."

When the prince had finished his billet, he folded it up, and inclosed in it the princess's ring. There, friend, said he to the iunuch, carry this to your mistress; if it does not cure her as soon as she reads it, and sees what it contains, I give you leave to tell every body, that I am the most ignorant and impudent astrologer that ever existed.

Scheherazade was prevented from proceeding with her story by the dawning day; but the next night she continued, and spoke thus to the sultan of the Indies.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SECOND NIGHT.

THE eunuch entering the princess of China's apartment, gave her the packet, saying, The boldest astrologer that ever lived is arrived here, and pretends, that on reading this letter and seeing what it incloses, you will be cured; I wish he may prove neither a liar nor an impostor.

The princess Badoura took the billet, and opened it with indifference: but when she saw the ring, she had not patience to read it through: she rose hastily, broke the chain that held her, ran to the door and opened it. They immediately recognized each other, tenderly embraced, and without being able to speak for excess of joy, looked at one another, wondering how they met again after their first interview. The princess's nurse, who ran to the door with her, made them come into her apartment, where the princess Badoura gave the prince her ring, saying, Take it, I cannot keep it without restoring yours; which I will never part with; neither can it be in better hands.

The eunuch went immediately to inform the king of China of what had happened: Sir, said he, all the astrologers and doctors who have hitherto pretended to cure the princess were fools compared with the

present. He made use neither of schemes nor conjurations, of perfumes, nor any thing else, but cured her without seeing her. The monarch was agreeably surprised at this intelligence, and going to the princess's apartment, he embraced her, and afterwards the prince, and taking his hand joined it to the princess's, saying, Happy stranger, whoever you are, I will keep my word, and give you my daughter for your wife; though, by what I see in you, it is impossible for me to believe you are really what you pretend, and would have me take you to be.

Kummir al Zummaun thanked the king in the most humble expressions, that he might the better shew his gratitude. As for my condition, said he, I must own I am not an astrologer, as your majesty has guessed; I only put on the habit of one, that I might succeed the more easily in my ambition to be allied to the most potent monarch in the world. I was born a prince, and the son of a king and of a queen; my name is Kummir al Zummaun; my father is Shaw Zummaun, who now reigns over the islands that are well known by the name of the Islands of the Children of Khaledan. He then related to him his history, and how wonderful had been the origin of his love; that the princess's was altogether as marvellous; and that both were confirmed by the exchange of the two rings.

When the prince had done speaking, the king

said to him, This history is so extraordinary, it deserves to be known to posterity; I will take care it shall; and the original being deposited in my royal archives, I will spread copies of it abroad, that my own kingdoms and the kingdoms around me may know it.

The marriage was solemnized the same day, and the rejoicings were universal all over the empire of China. Nor was Marzavan forgotten: the king gave him an honourable post in his court, and a promise of further advancement.

The prince and princess enjoyed the fulness of their wishes in the sweets of marriage; and the king kept continual feastings for several months, to manifest his joy on the occasion.

In the midst of these pleasures Kummir al Zummaun dreamt one night that he saw his father on his bed at the point of death, and heard him thus address his attendants: My son, to whom I gave birth; my son, whom I so tenderly loved; whom I bred with so much fondness, so much care, has abandoned me, and is himself the cause of my death. He awoke with a profound sigh, which alarmed the princess, who asked him the cause.

Alas! my love, replied the prince, perhaps at the very moment while I am speaking, the king my father is no more. He then acquainted her with his melancholy dream, which occasioned him so much

uneasiness. The princess, who studied to please him in every thing, went to her father the next day, kissed his hand, and thus addressed him: I have a favour to beg of your majesty, and I beseech you not to deny me; but that you may not believe I ask it at the solicitation of the prince my husband, I assure you beforehand he knows nothing of my request: it is, that you will grant me your permission to go with him and visit his father.

Daughter, replied the king, though I shall be sorry to part with you for so long a time as a journey to a place so distant will require, yet I cannot disapprove of your resolution; it is worthy of yourself: go, child, I give you leave, but on condition that you stay no longer than a year in Shaw Zummaun's court. I hope the king will agree to this, that we shall alternately see, he his son and his daughter-in-law, and I my daughter and my son-in-law.

The princess communicated the king of China's consent to her husband, who was transported to receive it, and returned her thanks for this new token of her love.

The king of China gave orders for preparations to be made for their departure; and when all things were ready, he accompanied the prince and princess several days' journey on their way: they parted at length with much affliction on both sides: the king embraced them; and having desired the prince to be

kind to his daughter, and to love her always with the same tenderness he now did, he left them to proceed, and to divert himself, hunted as he returned to his capital.

When the prince and princess had recovered from their grief, they comforted themselves with considering how glad Shaw Zummaun would be to see them, and how they should rejoice to see the king.

After travelling about a month, they one day entered a plain of great extent, planted at convenient distances with tall trees, forming an agreeable shade. The day being unusually hot, the prince thought it best to encamp there, and proposed it to Badoura, who, having the same wish, the more readily consented. They alighted in one of the finest spots; a tent was presently set up; the princess, rising from the shade under which she had sat down, entered it. The prince then ordered his attendants to pitch their tents, and went himself to give directions. The princess, weary with the fatigues of the journey, bade her women untie her girdle, which they laid down by her; and she falling asleep, they left her alone.

Kummir al Zummaun having seen all things in order, came to the tent where the princess was sleeping: he entered, and sat down without making any noise, intending to repose himself; but observing the princess's girdle lying by her, he took it up,

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and looked at the diamonds and rubies one by one. In viewing it he observed a little purse hanging to it, sewed neatly on the stuff, and tied fast with a riband; he felt it, and found it contained something solid. Desirous to know what it was, he opened the purse, and took out a cornelian, engraven with unknown figures and characters. This cornelian, said the prince to himself, must be something very valuable, or my princess would not carry it with so much care. It was Badoura's talisman*, which the queen of China had given her daughter as a charm, that would keep her, as she said, from any harm as long as she had it about her.

The prince, the better to look at the talisman, took it out to the light, the tent being dark; and while he was holding it up in his hand, a bird darted down from the air and snatched it away from him[7].

The day breaking, the sultaness Scheherazade deferred the continuation of the story to the following night, when she went on thus:

* A scheme of her nativity drawn from the constellations of Heaven.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD NIGHT.

YOUR majesty will easily conceive the concern and grief of the prince, when he saw the bird fly away with the talisman*. He was more troubled than words can express, and cursed his unseasonable curiosity, by which his dear princess had lost a treasure, that was so precious, and so valued by her.

The bird having got its prize, settled on the ground not far off, with the talisman in its mouth. The prince drew near it, hoping it would drop it; but as he approached, the bird took wing, and settled again on the ground further off. Kummir al Zummaun followed, and the bird took a further flight: the prince being very dexterous at a mark, thought to kill it with a stone, and still pursued; the further it flew, the more eager he grew in pursuing, keeping it always in view. Thus the bird drew him along from hill to valley, and valley to hill, all the day, every step leading him out of the way from the plain where he had left his camp and the princess Badoura: and instead of perching at night on a

* There is an adventure like this in the romance of Peter of Provence and the fair Magdelena, which was taken from the Arabic.

bush, where he might probably have taken it, roosted on a high tree, safe from his pursuit. The prince, vexed to the heart at having taken so much pains to no purpose, thought of returning; But, said he to himself, which way shall I return? Shall I go down the hills and valleys which I have passed over? Shall I wander in darkness? and will my strength bear me out? How shall I dare appear before my princess without her talisman? Overwhelmed with such thoughts, and tired with the pursuit, sleep came upon him, and he lay down under a tree, where he passed the night.

He awoke the next morning before the bird had left the tree, and as soon as he saw it on the wing, followed it again the whole of that day, with no better success than he had done the last, eating nothing but herbs and fruits as he went. He did the same for ten days together, pursuing the bird, and keeping it in view from morning to night, lying always under the tree where it roosted. On the eleventh day, the bird continued flying, and Kummir al Zummaun pursuing it, came near a great city. When the bird had reached the walls, it flew over them, and the prince saw no more of it; so that he despaired of ever recovering the princess Badoura's talisman.

The prince, whose grief was beyond expression, went into the city, which was built on the sea-side,

and had a fine port; he walked up and down the streets without knowing where he was, or where to stop. At last he came to the port, in as great uncertainty as ever what he should do. Walking along the shore, he perceived the gate of a garden open, and an old gardener at work in it; the good man looking up, saw he was a stranger and a Moosulmaun, and asked him to come in, and shut the door after him.

Kummir al Zummaun entered, and demanded of the gardener why he was so cautious? Because, replied the old man, I see you are a stranger newly arrived; and this city is inhabited for the most part by idolaters, who have a mortal aversion to us Moosulmauns, and treat the few of us that are here with great barbarity. I suppose you did not know this, and it is a miracle that you have escaped as you have thus far: these idolaters being very apt to fall upon strangers, or draw them into a snare. I bless God, who has brought you into a place of safety.

Kummir al Zummaun thanked the honest gardener for his advice, and the security he offered him in his house; he would have said more, but the good man interrupted him, saying, Let us leave complimenting; you are weary, and must want to refresh yourself. Come in, and rest. He conducted him into his little hut; and after the prince had eaten heartily of what he set before him, with a cordiality that

charmed him, he requested him to relate how he had come there.

The prince complied; and when he had finished his story, without concealing any part of it, asked him which was the nearest route to his father's territories; saying, It is in vain for me to think of finding my princess where I left her, after wandering eleven days from the spot by so extraordinary an adventure. Ah! continued he, how do I know she is alive? and saying this, he burst into tears. The gardener replied, There was no possibility of his going thither by land, the ways were so difficult, and the journey so long; besides, there was no accommodation for his subsistence; or, if there were, he must necessarily pass through the countries of so many barbarous nations, that he would never reach his father's. It was a year's journey from the city where he then was to any country inhabited only by Moosulmauns; that the quickest passage for him would be to go to the isle of Ebene, whence he might easily transport himself to the isles of the children of Khaledan; that a ship sailed from the port every year to Ebene, and he might take that opportunity of returning to those islands. The ship departed, said he, but a few days ago; if you had come a little sooner, you might have taken your passage in it. You must wait till it makes the voyage again, and if you will stay with me and accept of my house, such

as it is, you shall be as welcome to it as to your own.

The prince was glad he had met with such an asylum, in a place where he had no acquaintance. He accepted the offer, and lived with the gardener till the time arrived that the ship was to sail to the isle of Ebene. He spent the interval in working by day in the garden, and passing the night in sighs, tears, and complaints, thinking of his dear princess Badoura. We must leave him in this place, to return to the princess, whom we left asleep in her tent.

The princess slept a long time, and when she awoke, wondered that the prince was not with her; she called her women, and asked if they knew where he was. They told her they saw him enter the tent, but did not see him go out. While they were talking to her, she took up her girdle, found her little purse open, and that the talisman was gone. She did not doubt but that the prince had taken it to see what it was, and that he would bring it back with him. She waited for him impatiently till night, and could not imagine what made him stay away from her so long.

When it was quite dark, and she could hear no tidings of him, she fell into violent grief: she cursed the talisman, and him that made it; and, had not she been restrained by duty, would have cursed the

queen her mother, who had given her such a fatal present. She was the more troubled, because she could not imagine how her talisman should have caused the prince's separation from her; she did not however lose her judgment, and came to a courageous resolution, not common with persons of her sex.

Only herself and her women knew of the prince's absence; for his men were reposing or asleep in their tents. The princess, fearing they would betray her, if they had any knowledge of this circumstance, moderated her grief, and forbade her women to say or do any thing that might create the least suspicion. She then laid aside her own habit, and put on one of Kummir al Zummaun's. She was so much like him, that the next day, when she came abroad, the male attendants took her for the prince.

She commanded them to pack up their baggage and begin their march; and when all things were ready, she ordered one of her women to go into her litter, she herself mounting on horseback, and riding by her side.

They travelled several months by land and sea; the princess continuing the journey under the name of Kummir al Zummaun. They touched at Ebene in their way to the isles of the children of Khaledan, and went to the capital of the island, where a king reigned, whose name was Armanos. The persons

who first landed, giving out that the ship carried prince Kummir al Zummaun, who was returning from a long voyage, and was forced in by a storm, the news of his arrival was soon carried to court.

King Armanos, accompanied by his courtiers, went immediately to wait on the prince, and met the princess just as she was landing, and going to the palace that had been prepared for her. He received her as the son of a king, who was his friend, and with whom he always kept up a good understanding: he conducted her to the palace, where an apartment was prepared for her and all her attendants; though she would fain have excused herself. He shewed her all possible honour, and entertained her three days together with extraordinary magnificence. At the end of this time king Armanos understanding that the princess intended proceeding on her voyage, charmed with the air and qualities of such an accomplished prince, as he supposed her, took an opportunity when she was alone, and spoke to her in this manner: You see, prince, that I am old, and to my great mortification have not a son to whom I may leave my crown. Heaven has only blest me with one daughter, whose beauty cannot be better matched than with a prince of your rank and accomplishments. Instead of going home, stay and accept my crown, which I will resign in your favour. It is time for me to rest, and nothing could

be a greater pleasure to me in my retirement, than to see my people ruled by so worthy a successor to my throne.

The sultaness Scheherazade would have proceeded, but the day appearing, prevented her; the next night she continued her story, speaking thus to the sultan of the Indies.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOURTH NIGHT.

THE king's offer to bestow his only daughter in marriage, and with her his kingdom, on the princess Badoura, put her into unexpected perplexity. She thought it would not become a princess of her rank to undeceive the king, and to own that she was not prince Kummir al Zummaun, whose part she had hitherto acted so well. She was also afraid to decline the honour he offered her, lest, being so much bent upon the conclusion of the marriage, his kindness might turn to aversion, and he might attempt something even against her life.

These considerations, added to the prospect of obtaining a kingdom for the prince her husband, in case she found him again, determined her to accept the proposal of king Armanos, and marry his daughter. After having stood silent for some minutes, she with blushes, which the king took for a sign of modesty, answered, I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for your good opinion of me, for the honour you do me, and the great favour you offer, which I cannot pretend to merit, and dare not refuse.

But, continued she, I cannot accept this great alliance on any other condition, than that your ma-

jesty will assist me with your counsels, and that I do nothing without having first obtained your approbation.

The marriage treaty being thus concluded, the ceremony was put off till the next day. In the mean time princess Badoura gave notice to her officers, who still took her for their prince, of what she was about to do, that they might not be surprised, assuring them the princess Badoura consented. She talked also to her women, and charged them to continue to keep the secret she had entrusted to them.

The king of the isle of Ebene, rejoicing that he had found a son-in-law so much to his satisfaction, next morning summoned his council, and acquainted them with his design of marrying his daughter to prince Kummir al Zummaun, whom he introduced to them, and told them he resigned the crown to him, and required them to acknowledge him for their king, and swear fealty to him. Having said this, he descended from his throne, and the princess Badoura, by his order, ascended it. As soon as the council broke up, the new king was proclaimed through the city, rejoicings were appointed for several days, and couriers despatched over all the kingdom, to see the same ceremonies observed with the usual demonstrations of joy.

At night there were extraordinary feastings at the palace, and the princess Haïatalnefous* was conducted to the princess Badoura, whom every body took for a man, dressed like a royal bride: the wedding was solemnized with the utmost splendor; they were left together, and retired to bed. In the morning, while the princess Badoura went to receive the compliments of the nobility in the hall of audience, where they congratulated her on her marriage and accession to the throne, king Armanos and his queen went to the apartment of their daughter to enquire after her health. Instead of answering, she held down her head, and by her looks they saw plainly enough that she was disappointed.

King Armanos, to comfort the princess Haïatalnefous, bade her not be troubled. Prince Kummir al Zummaun, said he, when he landed here might think only of going to his father's court. Though we have engaged him to stay by arguments, with which he ought to be well satisfied, yet it is probable he grieves at being so suddenly deprived of the hopes of seeing either his father or any of his family. You must wait till those first emotions of filial love are over; he will then conduct himself towards you as a good husband ought to do.

The princess Badoura, under the name and cha-

* This is an Arabic word, which signifies *the life of the soul.*

racter of Kummir al Zummaun, the king of Ebene, spent the whole day in receiving the compliments of the courtiers and the nobility of the kingdom who were in and about the city, and in reviewing the regular troops of her household; and entered on the administration of affairs with so much dignity and judgment, that she gained the general applause of all who were witnesses of her conduct.

It was evening before she returned to queen Haïatalnefous's apartment, and she perceived by the reception she gave her, that the bride was not at all pleased with the preceding night. She endeavoured to dissipate her grief by a long conversation, in which she employed all the wit she had (and she possessed a good share), to persuade her she loved her entirely. She then gave her time to go to bed, and while she was undressing she went to her devotions; her prayers were so long, that queen Haïatalnefous was asleep before they were ended. She then left off, and lay down softly by the new queen, without waking her, and was as much afflicted at being forced to act a part which did not belong to her, as in the loss of her dear Kummir al Zummaun, for whom she ceased not to sigh. She rose as soon as it was day, before Haïatalnefous was awake; and, being dressed in her royal robes as king, went to council.

King Armanos, as he had done the day before,

came early to visit the queen his daughter, whom he found in tears; he wanted nothing more to be informed of the cause of her trouble. Provoked at the contempt, as he thought, put upon his daughter, of which he could not imagine the reason: Daughter, said he, have patience for another night. I raised your husband to the throne, and can pull him down again, and drive him thence with shame, unless he shews you proper regard. His treatment of you has provoked me so much, I cannot tell to what my resentment may transport me; the affront is as great to me as to you.

It was late again before the princess Badoura came to queen Haïatalnefous. She talked to her as she had done the night before, and after the same manner went to her devotions, desiring the queen to go to bed. But Haïatalnefous would not be so served; she held her back, and obliged her to sit down. Tell me, I beseech you, said she, what can you dislike in a princess of my youth and beauty, who not only loves but adores you, and thinks herself the happiest of women in having so amiable a prince for her husband. Any body but me would be not merely offended but shocked by the slight, or rather the unpardonable affront, you have put upon me, and abandon you to your evil destiny. However, though I did not love you so well as I do, yet out of pure good-nature and humanity, which

makes me pity the misfortunes of persons for whom I am less concerned, I cannot forbear telling you, that the king my father is enraged against you for your behaviour towards me, and to-morrow will make you feel the weight of his just anger, if you continue to neglect me as you have hitherto done. Do not therefore drive to despair a princess, who, notwithstanding all your ill usage, cannot help loving you.

This address embarrassed the princess Badoura inexpressibly. She did not doubt the truth of what Haïatalnefous had said. King Armanos's coldness to her the day before had given her but too much reason to see he was highly dissatisfied with her. The only way to justify her conduct was, to communicate her sex to the princess Haïatalnefous. But though she had foreseen she should be under a necessity of making such a discovery to her, yet her uncertainty as to the manner in which she would receive it, made her tremble; but, considering that if Kummir al Zummaun was alive, he must necessarily touch at the isle of Ebene in his way to his father's kingdom, she ought to preserve herself for his sake; and that it was impossible to do this, if she did not let the princess Haïatalnefous know who and what she was, she resolved to venture the experiment.

The princess Badoura stood as one who had been struck dumb, and Haïatalnefous being impatient to

hear what she could say, was about to speak to her again, when she prevented her by these words: Lovely and too charming princess! I own I have been in the wrong, and I condemn myself for it; but I hope you will pardon me, and keep the secret I am going to reveal to you for my justification.

She then opened her bosom, and proceeded thus: See, princess, if a woman like yourself does not deserve to be forgiven. I believe you will be so generous, at least when you know my story, and the afflicting circumstance that forced me to act the part I have done.

The princess Badoura having discovered her sex to the princess of the isle of Ebene, she again prayed her to keep the secret, and to pretend to be satisfied with her as a husband, till the prince's arrival, which she hoped would be in a little time.

Princess, replied Haïatalnefous, your fortune is indeed strange, that a marriage, so happy as yours, should be shortened by so unaccountable an accident, after a passion so reciprocal and full of wonders. Pray heaven you may soon meet with your husband again, and assure yourself I will keep religiously the secret committed to me. It will be to me the greatest pleasure in the world to be the only person in the great kingdom of the isle of Ebene who knows what and who you are, while you go on governing the people as happily as you have begun. I

only ask of you at present to be your friend. Then the two princesses tenderly embraced each other, and after a thousand expressions of mutual friendship lay down to rest.

According to the custom of the country, the tokens of the consummation of the marriage were to be produced and seen publicly. The two princesses found out a way to get over that difficulty: queen Haïatalnefous's women were deceived themselves next morning, and deceived Armanos, his queen, and the whole court. From this time the princess Badoura rose in the king's esteem and affection, governing the kingdom peaceably and prosperously.

The sultaness of the Indies said no more, day appearing; but the following night she continued her narrative in these words to the sultan.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH NIGHT.

WHILE things passed as already mentioned in the court of the isle of Ebene, prince Kummir al Zummaun remained in the city of idolaters with the gardener, who had offered him his house for a retreat till the ship should sail to convey him away.

One morning early, when the prince was as usual preparing to work in the garden, the gardener prevented him, saying, This day is a great festival among the idolaters, and because they abstain from all work themselves, to spend the time in their assemblies and public rejoicings, they will not let the Moosulmauns labour; who, to gain their favour, generally attend their shews, which are worth seeing. You will therefore have nothing to do to-day: I leave you here. As the time approaches, at which it is usual for the ship to sail for the isle of Ebene, I will call on some of my friends to know when it will depart, and secure you a passage. The gardener put on his best apparel, and went out.

When the prince was alone, instead of going out to share in the public joy of the city, his solitude brought to his mind, with more than usual violence, the loss of his dear princess. He walked up and down the garden sighing and lamenting, till the noise

which two birds made on a neighbouring tree led him to lift up his head, to see what was the matter.

Kummir al Zummaun was surprised to observe that the birds were fighting furiously: in a very little while, one of them fell down dead at the foot of the tree; the victorious bird took wing again, and flew away.

In an instant, two other large birds, that had beheld the battle at a distance, came from the other side of the garden, and pitched on the ground, one at the feet, and the other at the head of the dead bird: they looked at it for some time, shaking their heads in token of grief; after which they dug a grave with their talons, and buried it.

When they had filled up the grave with the earth they had turned up, they flew away, but returned in a few minutes, bringing with them the bird that had committed the murder, one holding one of its wings in its beak, and the other one of its legs; the criminal all the while crying out in a doleful manner, and struggling to escape. They carried it to the grave of the bird which it had lately sacrificed to its rage, and there killed it in just revenge for the murder it had committed. They opened its belly, tore out the entrails, left the body on the spot unburied, and flew away.

The prince had remained in astonishment all the time that he stood beholding this singular spectacle.

He now drew near the tree where this scene had passed, and casting his eyes on the scattered entrails of the bird that had been last killed, spied something red hanging out of the stomach. He took it up, and found it was his beloved princess Badoura's talisman, which had cost him so much pain and sorrow, and so many sighs, since the bird had snatched it out of his hand. Ah, cruel! said he to himself, still looking on the bird, thou took'st delight in doing mischief, so I have the less reason to complain of that which thou didst to me: but the greater it was, the more do I wish well to those that revenged my quarrel, punishing thee for the murder of one of their own kind.

It is impossible to express the prince's joy: Dear princess, continued he to himself, this happy minute, which restores to me a treasure so precious to thee, is, without doubt, a presage of our meeting again, and perhaps sooner than I think of. Thank heaven who sent me this good fortune, and gives me hope of the greatest felicity that my heart can desire.

Saying this, he kissed the talisman, wrapped it up in a riband, and tied it carefully about his arm. He had been almost every night a stranger to rest, the recollection of his misfortunes keeping him awake, but this night he enjoyed calm repose: he rose somewhat later the next morning than he used to do, and went to the gardener for orders. The

good man bade him root up an old tree which bore no fruit.

Kummir al Zummaun took an axe and began his work. In cutting off a branch of the root, he found his axe struck against something that resisted the blow. He removed the earth, and discovered a broad plate of brass, under which was a staircase of ten steps. He went down, and at the bottom saw a cavity about six yards square, with fifty brass urns placed in order, each with a cover over it. He opened them all, one after another, and found they were all of them full of gold-dust. He came out of the cave, rejoicing that he had found such a vast treasure, put the brass plate on the staircase, and rooted up the tree against the gardener's return.

The gardener had ascertained that the ship, which was bound for the isle of Ebene, would sail in a few days, but the exact time was not yet fixed. His friend promised to let him know the day, if he called upon him on the morrow; and while the prince was rooting up the tree, he went to have his answer. He returned with a joyful countenance, by which the prince guessed he brought him good news. Son, said the old man (so he always called him on account of the difference of years between him and the prince), be joyful, and prepare to embark in three days; the ship will then certainly sail; I have agreed with the captain for your passage.

In my present situation, replied Kummir al Zummaun, you could not bring me more agreeable inteiligence; and in return, I have also tidings that will be as welcome to you: come along with me, and you shall see what good fortune heaven has in store for you.

The prince led the gardener to the place where he had rooted up the tree, made him go down into the cave, shewed him what a treasure he had discovered, thanking Providence for rewarding his virtue, and the pains he had been at for so many years. What do you mean? replied the gardener: do you imagine I will take these riches as mine? The property is yours: I have no right to it. For fourscore years, since my father's death, I have done nothing but dig in this garden, and could not discover this treasure, which is a sign it was destined for you, since God has permitted you to find it. It is better suited to a prince like you than to me; I have one foot in the grave, and am in no want of any thing. Providence has bestowed it upon you, just when you are returning to that country, which will one day be your own, where you will make good use of it.

Kummir al Zummaun would not be surpassed in generosity by the gardener. They disputed for some time. At last the prince solemnly protested, that he would have none of it, unless the gardener would

divide it with him. The good man, to please the prince, consented; so they shared it between them, and each had twenty-five urns.

Having thus divided it, Son, said the gardener to the prince, it is not enough that you have got this treasure; we must now contrive to carry it privately aboard, otherwise you will run the risk of losing it. There are no olives in the isle of Ebene, those that are exported hence are a good commodity there: you know I have plenty of them, take what you will; fill fifty pots, half with the gold-dust and half with olives, and I will get them carried to the ship when you embark.

The prince followed this advice, and spent the rest of the day in packing up the gold and the olives in the fifty pots*, and fearing the talisman, which he wore on his arm, might be lost again, he carefully put it into one of the pots, with a particular mark to distinguish it from the rest. When they were all ready to be shipped, night coming on, the prince retired with the gardener, and related to him the battle of the birds, with the circumstance by which he had found the talisman. The gardener was equally surprised and joyful to hear it on his account. Whether the old man was quite worn out with age, or had exhausted himself too much that

* This incident is also much the same in the romance of Peter of Provence, and the fair Magdelena.

day, the gardener had a very bad night; he grew worse the next day, and on the third day, when the prince was to embark, was so ill, that it was plain he was near his end. As soon as day broke, the captain of the ship came with several seamen to the gardener's; they knocked at the garden-door, which the prince opened to them. They asked him for the passenger who was to go with them. The prince answered, I am he; the gardener who agreed with you for my passage is sick, and cannot be spoken with; come in, and let your men carry those pots of olives and my baggage aboard for me: I will only take leave of the gardener, and follow you.

The seamen took the pots and the baggage, and the captain bade the prince make haste, the wind being fair.

When the captain and his men were gone, Kummir al Zummaun went to the gardener to take his leave of him, and thanked him for all his good offices; but found him in the agonies of death, and had scarcely time to bid him rehearse the articles of his faith [6], which all good Moosulmauns do before they die, before the gardener expired.

The prince being under the necessity of embarking immediately, hastened to pay the last duty to the deceased. He washed his body, buried him in his own garden, and having nobody to assist him, it was almost evening before he had put him into the

ground. As soon as he had done, he ran to the water-side, carrying with him the key of the garden, designing, if he had time, to give it to the landlord; otherwise to deposit it in some trusty person's hand before a witness, that he might have it after he was gone. When he reached the port, he was told the ship had sailed several hours, and was already out of sight. It had waited three hours for him, and the wind standing fair, the captain durst not stay longer.

Scheherazade would have continued, but day-light breaking in, she was obliged to be silent.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIXTH NIGHT.

It is easy to imagine that Kummir al Zummaun was exceedingly grieved at being forced to remain longer in a country where he neither had, nor wished to have, any acquaintance; to think that he must wait another year for the opportunity he had lost. But the greatest affliction of all was, his having parted with the princess Badoura's talisman, which he now considered lost. The only course left him was to return to the garden from whence he had come, to rent it of the landlord, and continue to cultivate it by himself, deploring his misery and misfortunes. He hired a boy to assist him to do some part of the drudgery: that he might not lose the other half of the treasure, which came to him by the death of the gardener, who died without heirs, he put the gold-dust into fifty other jars, which he filled up with olives, to be ready against the ship's return.

While the prince was beginning another year of labour, sorrow, and impatience, the ship having a fair wind, continued her voyage to the isle of Ebene, and happily arrived at the capital.

The palace being by the sea-side, the new king, or rather the princess Badoura, espying the ship as she was entering into the port, with all her flags,

asked what vessel it was: she was answered, that it came annually from the city of the idolaters, and was generally richly laden.

The princess, who always had Kummir al Zummaun in her mind, imagined that the prince might be aboard; and resolved to visit the ship and meet him, without discovering herself; but to observe him, and take proper measures for their making themselves mutually known. Under pretence of inquiring what merchandize was on board, and having the first sight of the goods, she commanded a horse to be brought, which she mounted, accompanied by several officers in waiting, and arrived at the port just as the captain came ashore. She ordered him to be brought before her, asked whence he had come, how long he had been on his voyage, and what good or bad fortune he had met with: if he had no stranger of quality aboard, and particularly with what his ship was laden.

The captain gave a satisfactory answer to all her demands; and as to passengers, assured her there were none but merchants in his ship, who used to come every year, and bring rich stuffs from several parts of the world to trade with, the finest linens painted and plain, diamonds, musk, ambergris, camphire, civet, spices, drugs, olives, and many other articles.

The princess Badoura loved olives extremely:

when she heard the captain speak of them, Land them, said she, I will take them off your hands; as to the other goods, tell the merchants to bring them to me, and let me see them before they dispose of, or shew them to any one.

The captain taking her for the king of the isle of Ebene, replied, Sire, there are fifty great jars of olives, but they belong to a merchant whom I was forced to leave behind. I gave him notice myself that I stayed for him, and waited a long time, but he not coming, and the wind offering, I was afraid of losing the opportunity, and so set sail. The princess answered, No matter, bring them ashore; we will nevertheless make a bargain for them.

The captain sent his boat, which in a little time returned with the olives. The princess demanded how much the fifty jars might be worth in the isle of Ebene? Sir, replied the captain, the merchant is very poor, and your majesty will do him a singular favour if you give him one thousand pieces of silver.

To satisfy him, said the princess, and because you tell me he is poor, I will order you one thousand pieces of gold for him, which do you take care to give him. The money was accordingly paid, and the jars carried to the palace.

Night drawing on, the princess withdrew into the inner palace, and went to the princess Haïatalnefous's apartment, ordering the olives to be brought thither.

She opened one jar to let the princess Haïatalnefous taste them, and poured them into a dish. Great was her astonishment, when she found the olives were mingled with gold-dust. What can this mean! said she: it is wonderful beyond comprehension. Her curiosity increasing from so extraordinary an adventure, she ordered Haïatalnefous's women to open and empty all the jars in her presence; and her wonder was still greater, when she saw that the olives in all of them were mixed with gold-dust; but when she saw her talisman drop out, she was so surprised that she fainted away. Haïatalnefous and her women brought the princess to herself, by throwing cold water in her face. When she recovered, she took the talisman, and kissed it again and again; but not being willing that the princess Haïatalnefous's women, who were ignorant of her disguise, should hear what she said, and it growing late, she dismissed them. Princess, said she to Haïatalnefous, as soon as they were gone, you who have heard my story, doubtless, guessed it was at the sight of the talisman that I fainted. This is that talisman, and the fatal cause of my losing my husband; but as it was that which caused our separation, so I foresee it will be the means of our meeting.

The next day, as soon as it was light, she sent for the captain of the ship; and when he came, spoke to him thus: I want to know something more of the

merchant to whom the olives belong, that I bought of you yesterday. I think you told me you left him behind in the city of the idolaters; can you tell me what is his employment there?

Yes, replied the captain, I can speak from my own knowledge. I agreed for his passage with a very old gardener, who told me I should find him in his garden, where he worked under him. He shewed me the place, and for that reason I told your majesty he was poor. I went thither to call him. I told him what haste I was in, spoke to him myself in the garden, and cannot be mistaken in the man.

If what you say is true, replied the princess, you must set sail this very day for the city of idolaters, and bring me that gardener's man, who is my debtor; else I will not only confiscate all your goods and those of your merchants, but your life and theirs shall answer for his. I have ordered my seal to be put on the warehouses where their goods are deposited, which shall not be taken off till your return: this is all I have to say to you; go and do as I command you.

The captain could make no reply to this order, the disobeying of which must have proved of such loss to him and his merchants. He acquainted them with it; and they hastened him away as fast as they could, after he had laid in a stock of provisions and fresh water for his voyage. They were so diligent,

that he set sail the same day. He had a prosperous voyage to the city of the idolaters, where he arrived in the night. When he was got as near the city as he thought convenient, he would not cast anchor, but lay to off shore; and going into his boat, with six of his stoutest seamen, landed a little way off the port, whence he went directly to the garden of Kummir al Zummaun.

Though it was about midnight when he came there, the prince was not asleep. His separation from the fair princess of China his wife afflicted him as usual. He cursed the minute in which his curiosity tempted him to touch the fatal girdle.

Thus was he passing those hours which are devoted to rest, when he heard somebody knock at the garden-door: he ran hastily to it; but he had no sooner opened it than the captain and his seamen took hold of him, and carried him to the boat, and so on ship-board. As soon as he was safely lodged, they set sail, and made the best of their way to the isle of Ebene.

Hitherto Kummir al Zummaun, the captain, and his men, had not said a word to one another; at last the prince asked the captain, whom he knew again, Why they had taken him away by force? The captain in his turn demanded of the prince, Whether he was not a debtor of the king of Ebene? I the king of Ebene's debtor! replied the prince in amaze-

ment; I do not know him, and have never set foot in his kingdom. The captain answered, You should know that better than I; you will talk to him yourself in a little while; till then stay here and have patience.

Scheherazade was obliged to stop here, the sultan rising to attend his usual business. She resumed the story at night, and thus went on.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVENTH NIGHT.

I HAVE told your majesty that the prince was taken out of his garden, and carried forcibly aboard ship. The captain was not long on his voyage back to the isle of Ebene. Though it was night when he cast anchor in the port, he landed immediately, and taking his prisoner with him, hastened to the palace, where he demanded to be introduced to the king.

The princess Badoura had withdrawn into the inner palace, but as soon as she heard of the captain's return, she came out to speak to him. Immediately as she cast her eyes on the prince, for whom she had shed so many tears, she recognized him in his gardener's habit. As for the prince, who trembled in the presence of a king, as he thought her, to whom he was to answer for an imaginary debt, it could not enter into his thoughts, that the person whom he so earnestly desired to see stood before him. If the princess had followed the dictates of her inclination, she would have run to him, and, by embracing, discovered herself to him; but she put a constraint on herself, believing that it was for the interest of both that she should act the king a little longer, before she made herself known. She contented herself for the present to put him into the hands of an officer, who

was then in waiting, charging him to take care of him, and use him well, till the next day.

When the princess Badoura had provided for Kummir al Zummaun, she turned to the captain, whom she was now to reward for the important service he had done her. She commanded another officer to go immediately to take the seal off the warehouse which contained his goods, and gave him a rich diamond, worth much more than the expence he had been at in both his voyages. She also bade him keep the thousand pieces of gold she had given for the olives, telling him she would make up the account with the merchant whom he had brought with him.

This done, she retired to the princess of the isle of Ebene's apartment, to whom she communicated her joy, praying her to keep the secret still. She told her how she intended to manage the discovering of herself to Kummir al Zummaun, and resignation of the kingdom to him; adding, there was so vast a distance between a gardener, as he would appear to the public, and a great prince, that it might be dangerous to raise him at once from the lowest condition of the people to the highest honour, however justice might require it should be done. The princess of the isle of Ebene was so far from betraying her, that she rejoiced with her, and entered into the design.

The next morning the princess of China ordered Kummir al Zummaun to be conducted early to the bath, and then to be appareled in the robes of an emir or governor of a province. She commanded him to be introduced into the council, where his fine person and majestic air drew upon him the eyes of all the lords present.

The princess Badoura herself was charmed to see him look as lovely as ever, and her pleasure inspired her to speak the more warmly in his praise. When she spoke to the council, having ordered the prince to take his seat among the emirs, she addressed them thus: My lords, Kummir al Zummaun, whom I have advanced to the same dignity with yourselves, is not unworthy of the place assigned him. I have known enough of him in my travels to answer for him, and I can assure you he will make his merit known to all of you, as well by his valour, as by a thousand other brilliant qualities, and the extent of his genius.

The prince was extremely amazed to hear the king of the isle of Ebene, whom he was far from taking for a woman, much less for his dear princess, name him, and declare that he knew him, while he thought himself certain he had never seen him before. He was much more surprised when he heard him praise him so highly. Those praises however from the mouth of majesty did not disconcert him,

though he received them with such modesty, as shewed that he deserved them. He prostrated himself before the throne of the king, and rising again, said, Sire, I want words to express my gratitude to your majesty for the honour you have done me; I shall do all in my power to render myself worthy of your royal favour.

From the council-board the prince was conducted to a palace, which the princess Badoura had ordered to be fitted up for him; where he found officers and domestics ready to obey his commands, a stable full of fine horses, and every thing suitable to the quality of an emir. When he was in his closet, the steward of his household brought him a strong box full of gold for his expenses.

The less he could conceive whence his happiness proceeded, the more he wondered, but he never once imagined that he owed it to the princess of China.

Two or three days after, the princess Badoura, that he might be nearer her person and in a more distinguished post, made him high treasurer, which office had lately become vacant. He conducted himself in his new charge with so much integrity, yet obliging every body, that he not only gained the friendship of the great, but also the affections of the people, by his uprightness and bounty.

Kummir al Zummaun had been the happiest man

in the world, to see himself in so high favour with a foreign king as he conceived, and increasing in the esteem of all his subjects, if he had had his princess with him. In the midst of his good fortune he never ceased lamenting her, and grieved that he could hear no tidings of her, especially in a country which she must necessarily have visited in her way to his father's court after their separation. He would have mistrusted something, had the princess still gone by the name of Kummir al Zummaun, which she took with his habit; but on her accession to the throne, she had changed it, and taken that of Armanos, in honour of the old king her father-in-law.

The princess desiring that her husband should owe the discovery of her to herself alone, resolved to put an end to her own torments and his; for she had observed, that as often as she discoursed with him about the affairs of office, he heaved such deep sighs, as could be addressed to nobody but her. While she herself lived in such a constraint, that she could endure it no longer.

The princess Badoura had no sooner formed her resolution in concert with the princess Haïatalnefous, than she the same day took Kummir al Zummaun aside, saying, I must talk with you about an affair which requires much consideration, and on which I want your advice. As I do not see how it can be done so conveniently as in the night, come hither in

the evening, and leave word at home not to be waited for; I will take care to provide you a lodging.

Kummir al Zummaun came punctually to the palace at the hour appointed by the princess; she took him with her into the inner apartment, and having told the chief eunuch, who prepared to follow her, that she had no occasion for his service, conducted him into a different apartment from that of the princess Haïatalnefous, where she used to sleep

When the prince and princess entered the chamber, she shut the door, and taking the talisman out of a little box, gave it to Kummir al Zummaun, saying, It is not long since an astrologer presented me with this talisman; you being skilful in all things, may perhaps tell me its use.

Kummir al Zummaun took the talisman, and drew near a lamp to view it. As soon as he recollected it, with an astonishment which gave the princess great pleasure, Sire, said he to the prince, your majesty asked me the use of this talisman. Alas! its only purpose is to kill me with grief and despair, if I do not quickly find the most charming and lovely princess in the world to whom it belonged, whose loss it occasioned me by a strange adventure, the recital of which will move your majesty to pity such an unfortunate husband and lover as I am.

You shall tell me the particulars another time,

replied the princess; I know something of them already: remain here a little, and I will soon return to you.

At these words she went into her closet, put off her royal turban, and in a few minutes dressed herself in her female attire; and having the girdle round her, which she had on the day of their separation, re-entered the chamber.

Kummir al Zummaun immediately recognized his dear princess, ran to her, and tenderly embraced her, exclaiming, How much am I obliged to the king who has so agreeably surprised me! Do not expect to see the king any more, replied the princess, embracing him in her turn, with tears in her eyes: you see him in me; sit down, and I will explain this enigma to you.

They seated themselves, and the princess related the plan she had formed in the plain where they were encamped the last time they were together, as soon as she perceived she waited for him to no purpose; how she went through with it till she arrived at the isle of Ebene, where she had been obliged to marry the princess Haïatalnefous, and accept of the crown, which king Armanos offered her as a condition of the marriage: how the princess, whose merit she highly extolled, had obliged her to make declaration of her sex: and how she found the talisman in the pots of olives mingled with the gold-dust, which she

had bought, and how this circumstance had proved the cause of her sending for him from the city of the idolaters.

When she had concluded her adventure, she obliged the prince to tell her by what means the talisman had occasioned their separation. He satisfied her inquiries; after which, it growing late, they retired to rest.

Scheherazade seeing the day begin to dawn, said no more, but the following night continued the story.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH NIGHT.

THE princess Badoura and Kummir al Zummaun rose next morning as soon as it was light, but the princess would no more put on her royal robes as king; she dressed herself in her female attire, and then sent the chief eunuch to king Armanos, her father-in-law, to desire he would oblige her by coming to her apartment.

When the king entered the chamber, he was amazed at seeing a lady who was unknown to him, and the high treasurer with her, who was not by etiquette permitted to come within the inner palace. He sat down, and asked where the king was.

The princess answered, Yesterday I was king, but to-day I am only princess of China, wife to the true prince Kummir al Zummaun. If your majesty will have patience to hear our adventures, I hope you will not condemn me for putting an innocent deceit upon you. The king bade her go on, and heard her narrative from beginning to end with astonishment. The princess on finishing said to him, Sir, though women do not easily comply with the liberty assumed by men to have several wives; yet if your majesty will consent to give your daughter the princess Haïatalnefous in marriage to the prince,

I will with all my heart yield up to her the rank and quality of queen, which of right belongs to her, and content myself with the second place. If this precedence were not her due, I would resign it to her, after the obligation I have to her for keeping my secret so generously. If your majesty refer it to her consent, I am sure of that, having already consulted her; and I will pass my word that she will be very well satisfied.

King Armanos listened to the princess with astonishment, and when she had done, turned to Kummir al Zummaun, saying, Son, since the princess Badoura your wife, whom I have all along thought to be my son-in-law, through a deceit of which I cannot complain, assures me, that she will divide your bed with my daughter; I would know if you are willing to marry her, and accept of the crown, which the princess Badoura would deservedly wear, if she did not quit it out of love to you. Sir, replied Kummir al Zummaun, though I desire nothing so earnestly as to see the king my father, yet the obligations I have to your majesty and the princess Haïatalnefous are so weighty, I can refuse her nothing. The prince was then proclaimed king, and married the same day with all possible demonstrations of joy; and had every reason to be well pleased with the princess Haïatalnefous's beauty, wit, and love for him.

The two queens lived together afterwards on the same friendly terms and in the same cordiality as they had done before, both being contented with Kummir al Zummaun's equal carriage towards them.

The next year each brought him a son at the same time, and the births of the two princes were celebrated with extraordinary rejoicings: the first, whom the princess Badoura was delivered of, was named Amgiad (most illustrious); and the other, born of queen Haïatelnefous, Assad (most virtuous).

THE STORY OF THE PRINCES AMGIAD AND ASSAD.

The two princes were brought up with great care; and, when they were old enough, had the same governor, the same instructors in the arts and sciences, and the same master for each exercise. The affection which from their infancy they conceived for each other occasioned an uniformity of manners and inclination, which increased it. When they were of an age to have separate households, they loved one another so tenderly, that they begged the king to let them live together. He consented, and they had the same domestics, the same equipages, the same apartment, and the same table. Kummir al Zummaun had formed so good an opinion of their capacity and integrity, that he made no scruple of admitting them into his council at the age of

eighteen, and letting them, by turns, preside there, while he took the diversion of hunting, or amused himself with his queens at his houses of pleasure.

The princes being equally handsome, the two queens loved them with incredible tenderness; but the princess Badoura had a greater kindness for prince Assad, queen Haïatalnefous's son, than for her own; and queen Haïatalnefous loved Amgiad, the princess Badoura's son, better than her own son Assad.

The two queens thought at first this inclination was nothing but a regard which proceeded from an excess of their own friendship for each other, which they still preserved: but as the two princes advanced in years, that friendship grew into a violent love, when they appeared in their eyes to possess graces that blinded their reason. They knew how criminal their passion was, and did all they could to resist it; but the familiar intercourse with them, and the habit of admiring, praising, and caressing them from their infancy, which they could not restrain when they grew up, inflamed their desires to such a height as to overcome their reason and virtue. It was their and the princes' ill-fortune, that the latter being used to be so treated by them, had not the least suspicion of their infamous passion.

The two queens had not concealed from each other this passion, but had not the boldness to declare it to the princes they loved; they at last re-

solved to do it by a letter, and to execute their wicked design, availed themselves of the king's absence, when he was gone on a hunting party for three or four days.

Prince Amgiad presided at the council on the day of his father's departure, and administered justice till two or three o'clock in the afternoon. As he returned to the palace from the council-chamber, an eunuch took him aside, and gave him a letter from queen Haïatalnefous. Amgiad took it, and read it with horror. Traitor, said he to the eunuch, as soon as he had perused it through, is this the fidelity thou owest thy master and thy king? At these words he drew his sabre, and cut off his head.

Having done this in a transport of anger he ran to the princess Badoura his mother, shewed her the letter, told her the contents of it, and from whom it came. Instead of hearkening to him, she fell into a passion, and said, Son, it is all a calumny and imposture; queen Haïatalnefous is a very discreet princess, and you are very bold to talk to me against her. The prince, enraged at his mother, exclaimed, You are both equally wicked, and were it not for the respect I owe my father, this day should have been the last of Haïatalnefous's life.

Queen Badoura might have imagined by the example of her son Amgiad, that prince Assad, who was not less virtuous, would not receive more fa-

vourably a declaration of love, similar to that which had been made to his brother. Yet that did not hinder her persisting in her abominable design; she, the next day, wrote him a letter, which she entrusted to an old woman who had access to the palace, to convey to him.

The old woman watched her opportunity to put it into his hands as he was coming from the council-chamber, where he presided that day in his turn. The prince took it, and reading it, fell into such a rage, that, without giving himself time to finish it, he drew his sabre and punished the old woman as she deserved. He ran immediately to the apartment of his mother queen Haïatalnefous, with the letter in his hand: he would have shewn it to her, but she did not give him time, crying out, I know what you mean; you are as impertinent as your brother Amgiad: be gone, and never come into my presence again.

Assad stood as one thunder-struck at these words, so little expected. He was so enraged, that he had like to have given fatal demonstrations of his anger; but he contained himself, and withdrew without making any reply, fearing if he stayed he might say something unworthy the greatness of his soul. Amgiad had not mentioned to him the letter which he had received the preceding day; and finding by what his mother had said to him that she was alto-

gether as criminal as queen Haïatalnefous, he went to his brother, to chide him for not communicating the hated secret to him, and to mingle his own sorrow with his.

The two queens, rendered desperate by finding in the two princes such virtue as should have made them look inwardly on themselves, renounced all sentiments of nature and of mothers, and conspired together to destroy them. They made their women believe the two princes had attempted their virtue: they counterfeited the matter to the life by their tears, cries, and curses; and lay in the same bed, as if the resistance they pretended to have made had reduced them almost to death's-door.

But, sir, said Scheherazade, day appears, and prevents my saying more at this time. She discontinued, and the next night proceeded with the story in this manner, addressing herself to the sultan of the Indies.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINTH NIGHT.

We left the two unnatural queens yesterday resolved on destroying the two princes their sons. When Kummir al Zummaun returned to the palace from hunting, he was much surprised to find them in bed together, in tears, acting despondency so well, that he was touched with compassion. He asked them with earnestness what had happened to them?

At this question, the dissembling queens wept and sobbed more bitterly than before; and after he had pressed them again and again to tell him, queen Badoura at last answered him: Sir, our grief is so well founded, that we ought not to see the light of the sun, or live a day, after the violence that has been offered us by the unparalleled brutality of the princes your sons. They formed a horrid design, encouraged by your absence, and had the boldness and insolence to attempt our honour. Your majesty will excuse us from saying any more; you may guess the rest by our affliction.

The king sent for the two princes, and would have killed them both with his own hand, had not old king Armanos his father-in-law, who was present, held his hand: Son, said he, what are you going to do? Will you stain your hands and your palace with

your own blood? There are other ways of punishing them, if they are really guilty.

He endeavoured thus to appease him, and desired him to examine whether they did indeed commit the crime of which they were accused.

It was no difficult matter for Kummir al Zummaun to restrain himself so far as not to butcher his own children. He ordered them to be put under arrest, and sent for an emir called Jehaun-dar *, whom he commanded to conduct them out of the city, and put them to death, at a great distance, and in what place he pleased, but not to see him again, unless he brought their clothes with him, as a token of his having executed his orders.

Jehaun-dar travelled with them all night, and early next morning made them alight, telling them, with tears in his eyes, the commands he had received. Believe me, princes, said he, it is a trying duty imposed on me by your father, to execute this cruel order: would to heaven I could avoid it! The princes replied, Do your duty; we know well you are nôt the cause of our death, and forgive you with all our hearts.

They then embraced, and bade each other a last adieu with so much tenderness, that it was a long time before they could leave one another's arms. Prince Assad was the first who prepared himself for the fatal stroke. Begin with me, said he, that I may

not have the affliction to see my dear brother Amgiad die. To this Amgiad objected; and Jehaun-dar could not, without weeping more than before, be witness of this dispute between them; which shewed how perfect and sincere was their affection.

At last they determined the contest, by desiring Jehaun-dar to tie them together, and put them in the most convenient posture for him to give them the fatal stroke at one blow. Do not refuse the comfort of dying together to two unfortunate brothers, who from their birth have shared every thing, even their innocence, said the generous princes.

Jehaun-dar granted their request; he tied them to each other, breast to breast; and when he had placed them so that he thought he might strike the blow with more certainty, asked them if they had any thing to command him before they died.

We have only one thing to desire of you, replied the princes, which is, to assure the king our father on your return, that we are innocent; but that we do not charge him with our deaths, knowing he is not well informed of the truth of the crime of which we are accused.

Jehaun-dar promised to do what they desired, and drew his sabre, when his horse, being tied to a tree just by, started at the sight of the sabre, which glittered against the sun, broke his bridle, and ran away into the country.

He was a very valuable horse, and so richly caparisoned, that the emir could not bear the loss of him. This accident so vexed him, that instead of beheading the two princes, he threw away his sabre, and ran after his horse.

The horse galloped on before him, and led him several miles into a wood. Jehaun-dar followed him, and the horse's neighing roused a lion that was asleep. The lion started up, and instead of running after the horse, made directly towards Jehaun-dar, who thought no more of his horse, but how to save his life. He ran into the thickest of the wood, the lion keeping him in view, pursuing him among the trees. In this extremity he said to himself, Heaven had not punished me in this manner, but to shew the innocence of the princes whom I was commanded to put to death; and now, to my misfortune, I have not my sabre to defend myself.

While Jehaun-dar was gone, the two princes were seized with a violent thirst, occasioned by the fear of death, notwithstanding their noble resolution to submit to the king their father's cruel order.

Prince Amgiad told the prince his brother there was a spring not far off. Ah! brother, said Assad, we have so little time to live, what need have we to quench our thirst? We can bear it a few minutes longer.

Amgiad taking no notice of his brother's remon-

strance, unbound himself, and the prince his brother. They went to the spring, and having refreshed themselves, heard the roaring of the lion. They also heard Jehaun-dar's dreadful cries in the wood, which he and the horse had entered. Amgiad took up the sabre which lay on the ground, saying to Assad, Come, brother, let us go and save the unfortunate Jehaun-dar; perhaps we may arrive soon enough to deliver him from the danger to which he is now exposed.

The two princes ran to the wood, and entered it just as the lion was going to fall on Jehaun-dar. The beast seeing prince Amgiad advancing towards him with a sabre in his hand, left his prey, and rushed towards him with great fury. The prince met him intrepidly, and gave him a blow so forcibly and dexterously, that it felled him to the ground.

When Jehaun-dar saw that he owed his life to the two princes, he threw himself at their feet, and thanked them for the obligation, in words which sufficiently testified his gratitude. Princes, said he, rising up and kissing their hands, with tears in his eyes, God forbid that ever I should attempt any thing against your lives, after you have so kindly and bravely saved mine. It shall never be said, that the emir Jehaun-dar was guilty of such ingratitude.

The service we have done you, answered the princes, ought not to prevent you from executing

the orders you have received: let us first catch your horse, and then return to the place where you left us.—They were at no great trouble to take the horse, whose mettle was abated with running. When they had restored him to Jehaun-dar, and were come near the fountain, they begged of him to do as their father had commanded; but all to no purpose. I only take the liberty to desire, said Jehaun-dar, and I pray you not to deny me, that you will divide my clothes between you, and give me yours; and go to such a distance, that the king your father may never hear of you more.

The princes were forced to comply with his request. Each of them gave him his clothes, and covered themselves with what he could spare them of his. He also gave them all the money he had about him, and took his leave of them.

After the emir Jehaun-dar had parted from the princes, he passed through the wood where Amgiad had killed the lion, in whose blood he dipped their clothes: which having done, he proceeded on his way to the capital of the isle of Ebene.

On his arrival there, Kummir al Zummaun enquired if he had done as commanded? Jehaun-dar replied, Behold, sir, the proofs of my obedience; giving him at the same time the princes' clothes.

How did they bear their punishment? Jehaun-dar answered, With wonderful constancy and resignation

to the decrees of heaven, which shewed how sincerely they made profession of their religion: but particularly with great respect towards your majesty, and an inconceivable submission to the sentence of death. We die innocent, said they; but we do not murmur: we take our death from the hand of heaven, and forgive our father; for we know he has not been rightly informed of the truth.

Kummir al Zummaun was sensibly touched at Jehaun-dar's relation. A thought occurred to him to search the princes' pockets; he began with prince Amgiad's, where he found a letter open, which he read. He no sooner recognized the hand-writing than he was chilled with horror. He then, trembling, put his hand into that of Assad, and finding there queen Badoura's letter, his horror was so great, that he fainted.

The sultaness Scheherazade perceiving, as she spoke these words, that day began to dawn, discontinued, and deferred the sequel of the story till the next night; when she resumed it in the following manner, and said to the sultan of the Indies—

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTIETH NIGHT.

NEVER was grief equal to Kummir al Zummaun's, when he recovered from his fit: Barbarous father, cried he, What hast thou done? Thou hast murdered thy own children, thy innocent children! Did not their wisdom, their modesty, their obedience, their submission to thy will in all things, their virtue, all plead in their behalf? Blind and insensible father! dost thou deserve to live after the execrable crime thou hast committed? I have brought this abomination on my own head; and heaven chastises me for not persevering in that aversion to women with which I was born. And, Oh ye detestable wives! I will not, no, I will not, as ye deserve, wash off the guilt of your sins with your blood; ye are unworthy of my rage: but I will never see you more!

Kummir al Zummaun was a man of too much religion to break his vow: he commanded the two queens to be lodged in separate apartments that very day, where they were kept under strong guards, and he never saw them again as long as he lived.

While the king of the isle of Ebene was afflicting himself for the loss of his sons, of whose death he thought he had been the author by his too rashly condemning them, the royal youths wandered

through deserts, endeavouring to avoid all places that were inhabited, and shun every human creature. They lived on herbs and wild fruits, and drank only rain-water, which they found in the crevices of the rocks. They slept and watched by turns at night, for fear of wild beasts.

When they had travelled about a month, they came to the foot of a frightful mountain of black stones, and to all appearance inaccessible. They at last espied a kind of path, but so narrow and difficult that they durst not venture to follow it: this obliged them to go along by the foot of the mountain, in hopes of finding a more easy way to reach the summit, but could discover nothing like a path, so they were forced to return to that which they had neglected. They still thought it would be in vain for them to attempt it. They deliberated for a long time what they should do, and at last, encouraging one another, resolved to ascend.

The more they advanced the higher and steeper the mountain appeared, which made them think several times of giving over their enterprise. When the one was weary, the other stopped, and they took breath together; sometimes they were both so tired, that they wanted strength to proceed: then despairing of being able to reach the top, they thought they must lie down and die of fatigue and weariness. A few minutes after, when they found they

recovered strength, they animated each other and went on.

Notwithstanding all their endeavours, their courage and perseverance, they could not reach the summit that day; night came on, and prince Assad was so spent, that he stopped and said to Amgiad, Brother, I can go no farther, I am just dying. Let us rest ourselves, replied prince Amgiad, as long as you will, and have a good heart; it is but a little way to the top, and the moon befriends us.

They rested about half an hour, and then Assad making a new effort, they ascended what remained of the way to the summit, where they both at last arrived, and lay down. Amgiad rose first, and advancing, saw a tree at a little distance. He went to it, and found it was a pomegranate, with large fruit upon it, and he perceived there was a spring at its foot: he ran to his brother Assad to tell him the good news, and conduct him to the tree by the fountain side. Here they refreshed themselves by eating each a pomegranate, after which they fell asleep.

When they awoke the next morning, Come, brother, said Amgiad to Assad, let us go on; I see the mountain is easier to be travelled over on this side than the other, all our way now is down hill: but Assad was so tired with the preceding day's exertions, that he wanted three days repose to recover himself.

They spent these days as they had done many before, in conversing on their mothers' inordinate passion, which had reduced them to such a deplorable state: but, said they, since heaven has so visibly declared itself in our favour, we ought to bear our misfortunes with patience, and comfort ourselves with hopes that we shall see an end of them.

After having rested three days, the two brothers continued their travels. As the mountain on that side was composed of several shelves of extensive flat, they were five days in descending before they came into the plain. They then discovered a large city, at which they rejoiced: Brother, said Amgiad to Assad, are not you of my opinion, that you should stay in some place out of the city, where I may find you again, while I go and inform myself what country we are in, and when I come back I will bring provisions with me? It may not be safe for us to go there together.

Brother, replied Assad, your plan is both safe and prudent, and I approve of what you say; but if one of us must part from the other on that account, I will not suffer it shall be you; you must allow me to go; for what shall I suffer, if any accident should befall you?

But, brother, answered Amgiad, the very accident you fear would befall me, I have as much reason to fear would happen to you: I intreat you to

let me go, and do you remain here patiently. I will never consent to this, said Assad; if any ill happen to me, it will be some comfort to think you are safe. Amgiad was forced to submit, and Assad going towards the city, he stayed under the trees at the foot of the mountain.

Prince Assad took the purse of money which Amgiad had in charge, and went forwards towards the city. He had not proceeded far in the first street, before he met with a reverend old man with a cane in his hand. He was neatly dressed, and the prince took him for a man of note in the place, who would not put a trick upon him; so he accosted him thus—Pray, my lord, which is the way to the market-place? The old man looked at prince Assad smiling—Child, said he, it is plain you are a stranger, or you would not have asked that question.

Yes, my lord, I am a stranger, replied Assad. The old man answered, You are welcome then; our country will be honoured by the presence of so handsome a young man as you are: tell me what business you have at the market-place.

My lord, replied Assad, it is near two months since my brother and I set out from our own country: we have not ceased travelling, and we arrived here but to-day; my brother, tired with such a long journey, stays at the foot of the mountain, and I am come to buy some provisions for him and myself.

Son, said the old man, you could not have come in a better time, and I am glad of it for your and your brother's sake. I made a feast to-day for some friends of mine: come along with me; you shall eat as much as you please; and when you have done, I will give you enough to last your brother and yourself several days. Do not spend your money, when there is no occasion; travellers are always in want of it: while you are eating I will give you an account of our city, which no one can do better than myself, who have borne all the honourable offices in it. It is well for you that you happened to light upon me; for I must tell you, all our citizens cannot so well assist and inform you. I can assure you some of them are very wicked. Come, you shall see the difference between a real honest man, as I am, and such as boast of being so, and are not.

I am infinitely obliged to you, replied Assad, for your kindness; I put myself entirely into your hands, and am ready to go with you where you please.

The old man, as he walked along by his side, laughed inwardly, to think he had got the prince in his clutches; and all the way, lest he should perceive his dissimulation, talked of various subjects, to preserve the favourable opinion Assad had of him. Among other things, he said, It must be confessed you were very fortunate to have spoken to me, rather than to any one else: I thank God I met with

you; you will know why, when you come to my house.

At length they arrived at the residence of the old man, who introduced Assad into a hall, where there were forty such old fellows as himself, who made a circle round a flaming fire, which they were adoring. The prince was not less struck with horror at the sight of so many men mistakenly worshipping the creature for the Creator, than he was with fear at finding himself betrayed into so abominable a place.

While the prince stood motionless with astonishment, the old cheat saluted the forty gray-headed men. Devout adorers of fire, said he to them, this is a happy day for us: where is Gazban? call him.

He spake these words aloud, when a negro who waited at the lower end of the hall immediately came up to him. This black was Gazban, who, as soon as he saw the disconsolate Assad, imagined for what purpose he was called. He rushed upon him immediately, threw him down, and bound his hands with wonderful activity. When he had done, Carry him down, said the old man, and fail not to order my daughters, Bostama and Cavama, to give him every day a severe bastinado, with only a loaf morning and night for his subsistence; this is enough to keep him alive till the next ship departs for the blue sea and the fiery mountain, where he shall be offered up an acceptable sacrifice to our divinity [10].

The sultaness stopped here for that time, being interrupted by the approach of morning: the next night she continued her narrative to the sultan of the Indies.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIRST NIGHT.

As soon as the old man had given the cruel order I spoke of yesterday, Gazban hurried prince Assad under the hall, through several doors, till they came to a dungeon, down to which led twenty steps; there he left him in chains of prodigious weight and bigness, fastened to his feet. When he had done, he went to give the old man's daughters notice: but their father had before sent for them, and given them their instructions himself: Daughters, said he to them, go down and give the Moosulmaun I just now brought in the bastinado: do not spare him; you cannot better shew your zeal for the worship of the fire.

Bostama and Cavama, who were bred up in their hatred to the faithful, received this order with joy. They descended into the dungeon that instant, stripped Assad, and bastinadoed him unmercifully, till the blood issued out of his wounds, and he was almost dead. After this cruel treatment, they put a loaf of bread and a pot of water by him, and retired.

Assad did not come to himself again for a long time; when he revived, he burst out into a flood of tears, deploring his misery. His comfort however was, that this misfortune had not happened to his brother.

Amgiad waited for his brother till evening with impatience; as two, three, or four of the clock in the morning arrived, and Assad did not return, he was in despair. He spent the night in extreme uneasiness; and as soon as it was day went to the city, where he was surprised to see but very few Moosulmauns. He accosted the first he met, and asked him the name of the place. He was told it was the city of the Magicians, so called from the great number of magicians, who adored the fire; and that it contained but few Moosulmauns. Amgiad then demanded how far it was to the isle of Ebene? He was answered, four months voyage by sea, and a year's journey by land. The man he talked to left him hastily, having satisfied him as to these two questions.

Amgiad, who had been but six weeks coming from the isle of Ebene with his brother Assad, could not comprehend how they had reached this city in so short a time, unless it was by enchantment, or that the way across the mountain was a much shorter one, but not frequented because of its difficulty.

Going farther into the town, he stopped at a tailor's shop, whom he knew to be a Moosulmaun by his dress. Having saluted him, he sat down, and told him the occasion of the trouble he was in.

When prince Amgiad had done talking, the tailor replied, If your brother has fallen into the hands of some magicians, depend upon it you will

never see him more. He is lost past all recovery; and I advise you to comfort yourself as well as you can, and to beware of falling into the same misfortune: to which end, if you will take my advice, you shall stay at my house, and I will tell you all the tricks of these magicians, that you may take care of yourself, when you go out. Amgiad, afflicted for the loss of his brother, accepted the tailor's offer, and thanked him a thousand times for his kindness to him.

THE STORY OF PRINCE AMGIAD AND A LADY OF THE CITY OF THE MAGICIANS.

For a whole month prince Amgiad never went out of the tailor's house without being accompanied by his host. At last he ventured to go alone to the bath. As he was returning home, he met a lady on the way. Seeing a handsome young man, she lifted up her veil, asked him with a smiling air, and bewitching look, whither he was going? Amgiad was overpowered by her charms, and replied, Madam, I am going to my own house, or, if you please, I will go to yours?

My lord, resumed the lady, with a smile, ladies of my quality never take men to their houses, they always accompany them to theirs.

Amgiad was much perplexed by this unexpected

reply. He durst not venture to take her home to his landlord's house, lest he should give him offence, and thereby lose his protection, of which he had so much need, in a city which required him to be always on his guard. He knew so little of the town, that he could not tell where to convey her, and he could not make up his mind to suffer the adventure to go unimproved. In this uncertainty, he determined to throw himself upon chance; and without making any answer, went on, and the lady followed him. Amgiad led her from street to street, from square to square, till they were both weary with walking. At last they entered a street, at the end of which was a closed gateway leading to a handsome mansion. On each side of the gateway was a bench. Amgiad sat down on one of them, as if to take breath: and the lady, more weary than he, seated herself on the other.

When she had taken her seat, she asked him, whether that was his house? You see it, madam, said Amgiad. Why do you not open the gate then, demanded the lady; what do you wait for? Fair lady, answered Amgiad, I have not the key; I left it with my slave, when I sent him on an errand, and he cannot be come back yet: besides, I ordered him afterwards to provide something good for dinner; so that I am afraid we shall wait a long time for him.

The prince, meeting with so many obstacles to

the satisfying of his passion, began to repent of having proceeded so far, and contrived this answer, in hopes that the lady would take the hint, would leave him out of resentment, and seek elsewhere for a lover; but he was mistaken.

This is a most impertinent slave, said the lady, to make us wait so long. I will chastise him myself as he deserves, if you do not, when he comes back. It is not decent that I should sit here alone with a man. Saying this, she arose, and took up a stone to break the lock, which was only of wood, and weak, according to the fashion of the country.

Amgiad did all he could to prevent her: What are you doing, madam? said the prince. For heaven's sake stay a little! What are you afraid of, replied the lady, is it not your own house? It is no great matter to break a wooden lock; a new one will not cost much. The lock she accordingly broke, and as soon as the door was open, entered the house and walked before him.

Amgiad gave himself over for a lost man, when he saw the door forced open. He paused to consider whether he should go into the house or make off as fast as he could, to avoid the danger which he believed was inevitable; and he was going to fly when the lady returned.

Seeing he did not enter, she asked, Why do not you come into your house? The prince answered, I

am looking to see if my slave is coming, fearing we have nothing ready. Come in, come in, resumed she, we had better wait for him within doors than without.

Amgiad, much against his will, followed her into the house. Passing through a spacious court, neatly paved, they ascended by several steps into a grand vestibule, which led to a large open hall very well furnished, where he and the lady found a table ready spread with all sorts of delicacies, another heaped with fruit, and a sideboard covered with bottles of wine.

When Amgiad beheld these preparations, he gave himself up for lost. Unfortunate Amgiad, said he *to himself*, thou wilt soon follow thy dear brother Assad.

The lady, on the contrary, transported at the sight, exclaimed, How, my lord, did you fear there was nothing ready? You see your slave has done more than you expected. But, if I am not mistaken, these preparations were made for some other lady, and not for me: no matter, let her come, I promise you I will not be jealous; I only beg the favour of you to permit me to wait on her and you.

Amgiad, greatly as he was troubled at this accident, could not help laughing at the lady's pleasantry. Madam, said he, thinking of something else that tormented his mind, there is nothing in what

you imagine; this is my common dinner, and no extraordinary preparation, I assure you. As he could not bring himself to sit down at a table which was not provided for him, he would have taken his seat on a sofa, but the lady would not permit him. Come, sir, said she, you must be hungry after bathing, let us eat and enjoy ourselves.

Amgiad was forced to comply: they both sat down, and began to regale themselves. After having taken a little, the lady took a bottle and glass, poured out some wine, and when she had drunk herself, filled another glass, and gave it to Amgiad, who pledged her. The more the prince reflected on this adventure, the more he was amazed that the master of the house did not appear; and that a mansion, so rich and well provided, should be left without a servant. It will be fortunate, said he to himself, if the master of the house do not return till I am got clear of this intrigue. While he was occupied with these thoughts, and others more troublesome, she ate and drank heartily, and obliged him to do the same. Just as they were proceeding to the desert, the master of the house arrived.

It happened to be Bahader [11], master of the horse to the king of the magicians. This mansion belonged to him, but he commonly resided in another; and seldom came to this, unless to regale himself with two or three chosen friends. He always sent pro-

visions from his other house on such occasions, and had done so this day by some of his servants, who were just gone when the lady and Amgiad entered.

Bahader came as he used to do, in disguise, and without attendants, and a little before the time appointed for the assembling of his friends. He was not a little surprised to find the door broken open; he entered, making no noise, and hearing some persons talking and making merry in the hall, he stole along under the wall, and put his head half-way within the door to see who they were.

Perceiving a young man and a young lady eating at his table the victuals that had been provided for his friends and himself, and that there was no great harm done, he resolved to divert himself with the adventure.

The lady's back was a little turned towards him, and she did not see the master of the horse, but Amgiad perceived him immediately. The glass was at the time in his hand, and he was going to drink; he changed colour at the sight of Bahader, who made a sign to him not to say a word, but to come and speak to him.

Amgiad drank and rose: Where are you going? enquired the lady. The prince answered, Pray, madam, stay here a little; I shall return directly. Bahader waited for him in the vestibule, and led

him into the court to talk to him without being overheard by the lady.

In saying these words, Scheherazade perceived the sultan's time of rising was come, so she discontinued the story till the next night, when she resumed it.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND NIGHT.

When Bahader and Amgiad were in the court, Bahader demanded of the prince, how the lady came into his house? and why they broke open his door? My lord, replied Amgiad, you may very reasonably think me guilty of a very unwarrantable action: but if you will have patience to hear me, I hope I shall convince you of my innocence. He then related, in a few words, what had happened, without disguising any part of the truth; and, to shew him that he was not capable of committing such an action as to break into a house, told him he was a prince, and informed him of the reason of his coming to the city of the magicians.

Bahader, who was a good man, was pleased with an opportunity of obliging one of Amgiad's rank: for by his air, his actions, and his well-turned conversation, he did not in the least doubt the truth of what he had asserted. Prince, said Bahader, I am glad I can oblige you in so pleasant an adventure. Far from disturbing the feast, it will gratify me to contribute to your satisfaction in any thing. Before I say any more on this subject, I must inform you my name is Bahader; I am master of the horse to the king of the magicians; I commonly reside in another

house, which I have in the city, and come here sometimes to have the more liberty with my friends. You have made this lady believe you have a slave, though you have none; I will personate that slave, and that this may not make you uneasy, and to prevent your excuses, I repeat again, that I will positively have it to be so; you will soon know my reason. Go to your place, and continue to divert yourself. When I return again, and come to you in a slave's habit, chide me for staying so long, do not be afraid even to strike me. I will wait upon you while you are at table till night; you shall sleep here, and so shall the lady, and to-morrow morning you may send her home with honour. I shall afterwards endeavour to do you more important services: go, and lose no time. Amgiad would have made him an answer, but the master of the horse would not suffer him, forcing him to return to the lady. He had scarcely re-entered the hall before Bahader's friends, whom he had invited, arrived. Bahader excused himself for not entertaining them that day, telling them they would approve of his reason when they should be informed of it, which they should be in due time. When they were gone, he went and dressed himself in a slave's habit.

Prince Amgiad returned to the lady much pleased at finding the house belonged to a man of quality, who had received him so courteously. When he sat

down again, he said, Madam, I beg a thousand pardons for my rudeness. I was vexed that my slave should tarry so long; the rascal shall pay for it when he comes: I will teach him to make me wait so for him.

Let not that trouble you, said the lady. The evil is his; if he is guilty of any faults, let him pay for it: but do not let us think of him, we will enjoy ourselves without him.

They continued at the table with the more pleasure, as Amgiad was under no apprehensions of the consequence of the lady's indiscretion, in breaking open the door. The prince was now as merry as the lady: they said a thousand pleasant things, and drank more than they ate, till Bahader arrived in his disguise.

Bahader entered like a slave who feared his master's displeasure for staying out when he had company with him. He fell down at his feet and kissed the ground, to implore his clemency; and when he had done, stood behind him with his hands across, waiting his commands.

Sirrah, said Amgiad, with a fierce tone, and angry look, Where have you been? What have you been doing, that you came no sooner?

My lord, replied Bahader, I ask your pardon; I was executing your orders, and did not think you would return home so early.

You are a rascal, said Amgiad, and I will break your bones, to teach you to lie, and disappoint me. He then rose up, took a stick, and gave him two or three slight blows; after which he sat down again.

The lady was not satisfied with this chastisement. She also rose, took the stick, and fell upon Bahader so unmercifully, that the tears came into his eyes. Amgiad, offended to the last degree at the freedom she took, and that she should use one of the king's chief officers so ill, called out to her in vain, to forbear. Let me alone, said she, I will give him enough, and teach him to be absent so long another time. She continued beating him with great fury, till Amgiad rose from the table, and forced the stick out of her hand, which she did not relinquish without much struggling. When she found she could beat Bahader no longer, she sat down, railed at and cursed him[12].

Bahader wiped his eyes, and stood up to fill out wine. When he saw they had done eating and drinking, he took away the cloth, cleared the hall, put every thing in its place; and night coming on, lighted up the lamps. Every time he came in, or went out, the lady muttered, threatened him, and gave him abusive language, to Amgiad's great regret, who would have hindered her, but could not. When it was time for them to retire to bed, Bahader prepared one for them on the sofa, and withdrew into a chamber, where he laid himself down, and soon fell

asleep, having been fatigued with his beating. Amgiad and the lady entertained one another for some time afterwards. The lady before she went to bed, having occasion to go to another part of the house, passing through the vestibule, heard Bahader snore, and having seen a sabre hanging up in the hall, turned back, and said to Amgiad, My lord, as you love me, do one thing for me. In what can I serve you? asked the prince. The lady answered, Oblige me so far as to take down this sabre and cut off your slave's head. Amgiad was astonished at such a proposal from a lady, and made no doubt but it was the wine she had drunk that induced her to make it. Madam, said he, let us suffer him to rest, he is not worthy of your farther notice: I have beaten him, and you have beaten him: that ought to be sufficient; besides, I am in other respects well satisfied with him.

That shall not satisfy me, replied the lady, in a violent passion; the rascal shall die, if not by your hands, by mine. As she spoke, she took down the sabre from the place where it hung, drew it out of the scabbard, and prepared to execute her wicked design.

Amgiad met her in the vestibule, saying, You shall be satisfied, madam, since you will have it so; but I should be sorry that any one besides myself should kill my slave. When she had given him the

sabre, Come, follow me, said he; make no noise, lest we should awaken him. They went into Bahader's chamber, where Amgiad, instead of striking him, aimed his blow at the lady, and cut off her head, which fell upon Bahader.

The day had now dawned, and Scheherazade perceiving it, said no more at this time. The next night she resumed the story, and said to the sultan—

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THIRD NIGHT.

BAHADER was awakened by the head of the lady falling upon him. He was amazed to see Amgiad standing by him with a bloody sabre, and the body of the lady lying headless on the ground. The prince told him what had passed, and said, I had no other way to prevent this furious woman from killing you, but to take away her life. My lord, replied Bahader, full of gratitude, persons of your rank and generosity are incapable of doing such a wicked action as she desired of you. You are my deliverer, and I cannot sufficiently thank you. After having embraced him, to evince the sense he entertained of his obligations to him, he said, We must carry this corpse out before it is quite day; leave it to me, I will do it. Amgiad would not consent to this, saying, He would carry it away himself, since he had struck the blow. Bahader replied, You are a stranger in this city, and cannot do it so well as one who is acquainted with the place. I must do it, if for no other reason, yet for the safety of both of us, to prevent our being questioned about her death. Remain you here, and if I do not return before day, you may be sure the watch has seized me; and for fear of the

worst, I will by writing give this house and furniture for your habitation.

When he had written, signed, and delivered the paper to prince Amgiad, he put the lady's body in a bag, head and all; laid it on his shoulder, and went out with it from one street to another, taking the way to the sea-side. He had not proceeded far before he met one of the judges of the city, who was going the rounds in person. Bahader was stopped by the judge's followers, who, opening the bag, found the body of a murdered lady, bundled up with the head. The judge, who knew the master of the horse notwithstanding his disguise, took him home to his house, and not daring to put him to death without telling the king, on account of his rank, carried him to court as soon as it was day. When the king had been informed by the judge of the crime Bahader had, as he believed from the circumstances, committed, he addressed himself to the master of the horse as follows: It is thus then that thou murderest my subjects, to rob them, and then wouldst throw their dead bodies into the sea, to hide thy villany? Let us get rid of him; execute him immediately.

Innocent as Bahader was, he received sentence of death with resignation, and said not a word in his justification. The judge carried him to his house, and while the pale was preparing, sent a crier to

publish throughout the city, that at noon the master of the horse was to be impaled for a murder.

Prince Amgiad, who had in vain expected Bahader's return, was struck with consternation when he heard the crier publish the approaching execution of the master of the horse. If, said he to himself, any one ought to die for the murder of such a wicked woman, it is I, and not Bahader; I will never suffer an innocent man to be punished for the guilty. Without deliberating, he then hastened to the place of execution, whither the people were running from all parts.

When Amgiad saw the judge bringing Bahader to the pale, he went up to him, and said, I am come to assure you, that the master of the horse, whom you are leading to execution, is wholly innocent of the lady's death; I alone am guilty of the crime, if it be one, to have killed a detestable woman, who would have murdered Bahader. He then related to him how it had happened.

The prince having informed the judge of the manner in which he had met her coming from the bath; how she had occasioned his going into the master of the horse's pleasure-house, and all that had passed to the moment in which he was forced to cut off her head, to save Bahader's life; the judge ordered execution to be stopped, and conducted Amgiad to

the king, taking the master of the horse with them.

The king wished to hear the story from Amgiad himself; and the prince, the better to prove his own innocence and that of the master of the horse, embraced the opportunity to discover who he was, and what had driven him and his brother Assad to that city, with all the accidents that had befallen them, from their departure from the isle of Ebene.

The prince having finished his account, the king said to him, I rejoice that I have by this means been made acquainted with you; I not only give you your own life, and that of my master of the horse, whom I commend for his kindness to you, but I restore him to his office; and as for you, prince, I declare you my grand vizier, to make amends for your father's unjust usage, though it is also excusable, and I permit you to employ all the authority with which I now invest you to find out prince Assad.

Amgiad having thanked the king for the honour he had done him on taking possession of his office of grand vizier, used every possible means to find out the prince his brother. He ordered the common criers to promise a great reward to any one who should discover him, or give any tidings of him. He sent men up and down the country to the same purpose; but in vain.

Assad in the mean while continued in the dungeon in chains; Bostama and Cavama, the cunning old conjuror's daughters, treating him daily with the same cruelty and inhumanity as at first.

The solemn festival of the adorers of fire approached; and a ship was fitted out for the fiery mountain as usual: the captain's name was Behram, a great bigot to his religion. He loaded it with proper merchandize; and when it was ready to sail, put Assad in a chest, which was half full of goods, a few crevices being left between the boards to give him air.

Before the ship sailed, the grand vizier Amgiad, who had been told that the adorers of fire used to sacrifice a Moosulmaun every year on the fiery mountain, suspecting that Assad might have fallen into their hands, and be designed for a victim, resolved to search the ship in person. He ordered all the passengers and seamen to be brought upon deck, and commanded his men to search all over the ship, which they did, but Assad could not be found, he was so well concealed.

When the grand vizier had done searching the vessel, she sailed. As soon as Behram was got out to sea, he ordered prince Assad to be taken out of the chest, and fettered, to secure him, lest he should throw himself into the sea in despair, since he knew he was going to be sacrificed.

The wind was very favourable for a few days, after which there arose a furious storm. The vessel was driven out of her course, so that neither Behram nor his pilot knew where they were. They were afraid of being wrecked on the rocks, for in the violence of the storm they discovered land, and a dangerous shoal before them. Behram perceived that he was driven into the port and capital of queen Margiana, which occasioned him great mortification.

This queen Margiana was a devout professor of the Mahummedan faith, and a mortal enemy to the adorers of fire. She had banished all of them out of her dominions, and would not suffer their ships to touch at her ports.

It was no longer in the power of Behram to avoid putting into the harbour, for he had no alternative but to be dashed to pieces against the frightful rocks that lay off the shore. In this extremity he held a council with his pilot and seamen. My lads, said he, you see to what a necessity we are reduced. We must choose one of two things; either to resolve to be swallowed up by the waves, or put into queen Margiana's port, whose hatred to all persons of our religion you well know. She will certainly seize our vessel and put us all to death, without mercy. I see but one way to escape her, which is, to take off the fetters from the Moosulmaun we have aboard, and dress him like a slave. When

queen Margiana commands me to come before her, and asks what trade I follow, I will tell her I deal in slaves; that I have sold all I had, but one, whom I keep to be my clerk, because he can read and write. She will by this means see him, and he being handsome, and of her own religion, will have pity on him. No doubt she will then ask to buy him of me, and on this account will let us stay in the port till the weather is fair. If any of you have any thing else to propose that will be preferable, I am ready to attend to it. The pilot and seamen applauded his judgment, and agreed to follow his advice.

The sultaness Scheherazade was obliged to stop here, because she saw the day appear; she continued her story the night following, addressing herself thus to the sultan of the Indies:

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FOURTH NIGHT.

BEHRAM commanded prince Assad's chains to be taken off, and had him neatly habited like a slave, as became one who was to pass for his clerk before the queen of the country. They had scarcely time to do this, before the ship drove into the port, and dropped anchor.

Queen Margiana's palace was so near the sea, that her garden extended down to the shore. She saw the ship anchor, and sent to the captain to come to her, and the sooner to satisfy her curiosity waited for him in her garden.

Behram landed with prince Assad, whom he required to confirm what he had said of his being a slave, and his clerk. When he was introduced to the queen, he threw himself at her feet, and informed her of the necessity he was under to put into her port; that he dealt in slaves, and had sold all he had but one, who was Assad, whom he kept for his clerk.

The queen was taken with Assad from the moment she first saw him, and was extremely glad to hear that he was a slave; resolving to buy him, cost what he would. She asked Assad what was his name.

Great queen, he replied, with tears in his eyes, does your majesty ask what my name was formerly, or what it is now? The queen answered, Have you two names then? Alas! I have, said Assad: I was once called Assad (most happy); and now my name is Motar (devoted to be sacrificed).

Margiana not being able to comprehend the meaning of his answer, interpreted it to refer to his condition of a slave. Since you are clerk to the captain, said she, no doubt you can write well; let me see your hand.

Behram had furnished Assad with pen, ink, and paper, as a token of his office, that the queen might take him for what he designed she should.

The prince stepped a little aside, and wrote as follows, suitable to his wretched circumstances:

" The blind man avoids the ditch into which the clear-sighted falls. Fools advance themselves to honours, by discourses which signify nothing, while men of sense and eloquence live in poverty and contempt. The Moosulmaun with all his riches is miserable. The infidel triumphs. We cannot hope things will be otherwise. The Almighty has decreed it shall be so."

Assad presented the paper to queen Margiana, who admired alike the moral of the sentences, and the goodness of the writing. She needed no more

to have her heart inflamed, and to feel a sincere concern for his misfortunes. She had no sooner read the lines, than she addressed herself to Behram, saying, Do which you will, either sell me this slave, or make me a present of him; perhaps it will turn most to your account to do the latter.

Behram answered insolently, that he could neither give nor sell him; that he wanted his slave, and would keep him.

Queen Margiana, provoked at his rudeness, would not talk to him any more on the subject. She took the prince by the arm, and turned him before her to the palace, sending Behram word, that if he stayed the night in her port, she would confiscate his goods, and burn his ship. He was therefore forced to return to his vessel, and prepare to put to sea again, notwithstanding the tempest had not yet subsided.

Queen Margiana, on entering her palace, commanded supper to be got ready; and while it was providing, she ordered Assad to be brought into her apartment, where she bade him sit down. Assad would have excused himself: It becomes not a slave, said he, to presume to this honour.

To a slave! replied the queen: you were so a moment ago; henceforward you are no more a slave. Sit down near me, and tell me the story of your

life; for by what you wrote, and the insolence of that slave-merchant, I guess there is something extraordinary in your history.

Prince Assad obeyed her; and sitting down, began thus: Mighty queen, your majesty is not mistaken, in thinking there is something extraordinary in the story of my life: it is indeed more so than you can imagine. The ills, the incredible torments I have suffered, and the death to which I was devoted, and from which I am delivered by your royal generosity, will shew the greatness of my obligation to you, never to be forgotten. But before I enter into particulars of my miseries, which will strike horror into the hearts of all that hear them, I must trace the origin of them to its source.

This preamble increased queen Margiana's curiosity. The prince then told her of his royal birth; of his brother Amgiad, and their mutual friendship; of their mother's criminal passion, the cause of all their sufferings; of the king his father's rage; how miraculously their lives were saved; how he had lost his brother; how he had been long imprisoned and tortured, and was devoted to be sacrificed on the fiery mountain.

When Assad had finished his recital, the queen was more than ever enraged at the adorers of fire. Prince, said she, though I have always had an aversion to the adorers of fire, yet hitherto I have had

some humanity for them: but after their barbarous usage of you, and their execrable design to sacrifice you, I will henceforth wage perpetual war against them.

She was proceeding, but supper being served in, she made prince Assad sit down at table with her, being charmed with his beauty and eloquence, and touched with a passion which she hoped soon to have an opportunity of making known to him. Prince, said she, we must make you amends for so many fasts and wretched meals, to which the pitiless adorers of fire made you submit; you must want nourishment after such sufferings. With conversation of this kind she helped him at supper; and ordered him to drink a good deal of wine to recover his spirits; by which means he drank more than he could well bear.

The cloth being taken away, Assad having occasion to go out, took an opportunity when the queen did not observe him. He descended into the court, and seeing the garden-door open, went into it. Being tempted by the pleasantness of the place, he walked there for some time. At last he came to a fountain, where he washed his face and hands to refresh himself, and lying down on the turf by the fountain, fell asleep.

Behram, to prevent the queen from executing her threats, had weighed anchor, vexed at the loss

of Assad, by which he was disappointed of a most acceptable sacrifice. He comforted himself as well as he could, with the thoughts that the storm was over, and that a land breeze favoured his getting off the coast. As soon as he was towed out of the port by the help of his boat, before it was hoisted up into the ship again, Stop, my lads, said he to the seamen, do not come on board yet; I will give you some casks to fill with water, and wait for you. Behram had observed, while he was talking to the queen in the garden, that there was a fountain at the end of it, near the port. Go, said he, land before the palace-garden; the wall is not above breast high, you may easily get over; there is a bason in the middle of the garden, where you may fill all your barrels, and hand them aboard without difficulty.

The sailors went ashore at the place he directed them to, and laying their casks on their shoulders, easily got over the wall.

As they approached the bason, they perceived a man sleeping on the grass, and knew him to be Assad. They immediately divided themselves; and while some of the crew filled their barrels with as little noise as possible, others surrounded Assad, and watched to seize him if he should awake.

He slept on undisturbed, giving them time to fill all their casks; which they afterwards handed over

the wall to others of the crew who waited to carry them aboard.

They next seized Assad, and conveyed him away, without giving him time to recollect himself. They got him over the wall into their boat with the casks, and rowed to the ship. When they drew near her they cried out for joy, Captain, sound your trumpets, beat your drums, we have brought you your slave.

Behram, who could not imagine how the seamen could find and take him again, and did not see Assad in the boat, it being night, waited their arrival with impatience, to ask what they meant; but when he saw him, he could not contain himself for joy. He commanded him to be chained, without staying to inquire how they came by him; and having hoisted the boat on board, set sail for the fiery mountain.

The sultaness discontinued her story here, but the next night resumed it as follows.

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIFTH NIGHT.

I LEFT off yesterday where Behram was making the best of his way to the fiery mountain, overjoyed that he had recovered his captive, prince Assad.

In the meanwhile queen Margiana was in alarm. She was not at first apprehensive when she found prince Assad was gone out, because she did not doubt but he would soon return. When some time had passed without his appearing, she began to be uneasy, and commanded her women to look for him. They sought for him in every direction, and at night renewed their search by torch-light, but all to no purpose.

Queen Margiana was so impatient and alarmed, that she went herself with lights, and finding the garden-door open, entered, and walked all over it with her women to seek for him. Passing by the foun-

tain and bason, she espied a slipper, which she took up, and knew it to be prince Assad's; her women also recognized it to be his. This circumstance, together with the water being spilt about the edge of the bason, induced her to believe that Behram had carried him off. She sent immediately to see if he was still in the port; and hearing he had sailed a little before it was dark, that he lay-to some time

off the shore, while he sent his boat for water from the fountain, she sent word to the commander of ten ships of war, which lay always ready in the harbour, to sail on the shortest notice, that she would embark herself next morning as soon as it was day. The commander lost no time, ordered the captains, seamen and soldiers aboard, and was ready to sail at the time appointed. She embarked, and when the squadron was at sea, told the commander her intention. Make all the sail you can, said she, and chace the merchantman that sailed last night out of this port. If you capture it, I assign it to you as your property; but if you fail, your life shall answer.

The ten ships chased Behram's vessel two whole days without seeing her. The third day in the morning they discovered her, and at noon had so surrounded her, that she could not escape.

As soon as Behram espied the ten ships of war, he made sure it was queen Margiana's squadron in pursuit of him; and upon that he ordered Assad to be bastinadoed, which he had done every day. He was much perplexed what to do, when he found he was surrounded. To keep Assad, was to declare himself guilty; to kill him was as dangerous, for he feared some marks of the murder might be seen. He therefore commanded him to be unfettered and brought from the bottom of the hold where he lay. When he came before him, It is thou, said he, that

art the cause of my being pursued; and so saying, he flung him into the sea.

Prince Assad being an expert swimmer, made such good use of his feet and hands, that he reached the shore in safety. The first thing he did after he had landed, was to thank God who had delivered him from so great a danger, and once more rescued him out of the hands of the adorers of fire. He then stripped himself, and wringing the water out of his clothes, spread them on a rock, where, by the heat of the sun, and of the rock, they soon dried. After this he lay down to rest himself, deploring his miserable condition, not knowing in what country he was, nor which way to direct his course. He dressed himself again and walked on, keeping as near the sea-side as he could. At last he entered a kind of path, which he followed, and travelled on ten days through an uninhabited country, living on herbs, plants, and wild fruits. At last he approached a city, which he recognized to be that of the magicians, where he had been so ill-used, and where his brother Amgiad was grand vizier. He rejoiced to discover where he was, but resolved not to approach any of the adorers of fire, and to converse only with Moosulmauns, for he remembered he had seen some the first time he entered the town. It being late, and knowing the shops were already shut, and few people in the streets, he resolved to

remain in a burying-ground near the city, where there were several tombs built in the form of mausoleums. He found the door of one of them open, which he entered, designing to pass the night there.

We must now return to Behram's ship, which, after he had thrown prince Assad overboard, was soon surrounded on all sides by queen Margiana's squadron. The ship in which queen Margiana was in person first came up with him, and Behram, being in no condition of defence against so many, furled his sails as a mark of his submission.

The queen herself boarded his ship, and demanded where the clerk was, whom he had the boldness to take or cause to be taken out of her palace. Behram replied, O queen! I swear by your majesty, he is not in my ship; you will, by searching, be convinced of my innocence.

Margiana ordered the ship to be searched as narrowly as possible, but she could not find the man, whom she so much wished to recover, as well on account of her love for him, as of the generosity for which she was distinguished. She once resolved to kill Behram with her own hand, but refrained, and contented herself with seizing his ship and cargo, and turning him and his men on shore in their boat.

Behram and his seamen arrived at the city of the magicians the same night as Assad, and stopped at the same burying-ground, the city gates being shut,

intending to stay in some tomb till the next day, when they should be opened again.

To Assad's misfortune, Behram came to that in which the prince was sleeping with his head wrapt up in his habit, and entered it. Assad awoke at the noise of his footsteps, and demanded who was there.

Behram immediately recognized him. Hah, hah, said he, thou art the man who has ruined me for ever; thou hast escaped being sacrificed this year, but depend on it thou shalt not be so fortunate the next. Saying this, he flew upon him, clapt his handkerchief into his mouth to prevent his making a noise, and with the assistance of his seamen bound him.

The next morning as soon as the city gates were open, Behram and his men easily carried Assad through streets, where no one was yet stirring, to the old man's house where he had been so inhumanly treated. As soon as he was brought in, he was again thrown into the same dungeon. Behram acquainted the old man with the unfortunate circumstances of his return, and the ill success of his voyage. The old savage, upon this, commanded his two daughters Bostana and Cavama to treat him, if possible, more cruelly than before.

Assad was overwhelmed with terror at seeing himself again in the hands of persecutors from whom

he had suffered so much, and expected the repetition of the torments from which he hoped that he had been delivered. He was lamenting the severity of his fate, when Bostana entered with a stick in her hand, a loaf and a pitcher of water. He trembled at the sight of this unmerciful wretch, and at the very thoughts of the sufferings he was to endure for another year, at the conclusion of which he was to die the most horrible death.

At these words the sultaness Scheherazade saw the day begin to appear, which interrupted her story for the present. The next night she continued it, addressing herself thus to the sultan of the Indies:

THE TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIXTH NIGHT.

BOSTANA treated prince Assad as inhumanly as she had done during his first confinement. But his cries, lamentations, and earnest intreaties to her to spare him, joined with his tears, were so affecting, that she could not help shedding tears. My lord, said she, covering his shoulders again, I ask a thousand pardons for my inhuman treatment of you formerly, and for making you once more feel its effect. Till now I was afraid of disobeying a father, who is unjustly enraged against you, and resolved on your destruction, but at last I abhor this barbarity. Be comforted, your evil days are over. I will endeavour by better treatment to make amends for all my crimes, of the enormity of which you will find I am duly sensible. You have hitherto regarded me as an infidel; henceforth believe me one of your own religion; having been taught it by a slave, I hope your lessons will complete my conversion. To convince you of my sincerity, I first beg pardon of the true God for all my sins, in dealing so cruelly by you, and I trust he will put it in my power to set you entirely at liberty.

This address afforded the prince much comfort.

He thanked the Almighty for the change wrought in her heart. He also thanked her for her favourable disposition towards him, and omitted no arguments which he thought would have any effect in confirming her conversion to the Moosulmaun religion. He afterwards related to her the whole story of his life to that time. When he was fully assured of her good intentions respecting him, he asked her how she could continue to keep her sister Cavama in ignorance of them; and prevent her treating him as barbarously as she used to do? Let not that trouble you, replied Bostana; I know how to order matters so that she shall never come near you.

She accordingly every day prevented her sister's coming down into the dungeon, where she often visited the prince. Instead of carrying him bread and water, she now brought him the best wine and the choicest victuals she could procure, which were prepared by her twelve Mahummedan slaves. She ate with him herself from time to time, and did all in her power to alleviate his misfortunes.

A few days afterwards, Bostana, as she stood at her father's door, observed the public crier making proclamation, but she could not hear what it was about, being too far off. As he was proceeding in the direction of her father's house, she went in, and holding the door half open, perceived that he went

before the grand vizier Amgiad, brother to Assad; who was accompanied by several officers, and other attendants.

The crier, a few steps from the house, repeated the proclamation with a loud voice, as follows: The most excellent and illustrious grand vizier is come in person to seek for his dear brother, from whom he was separated about a year ago. He is a young man of such an appearance; if any one has him in keeping, or knows where he is, his excellency commands that they bring him forth, or give him notice where to find him, promising a great reward to the person that shall give the information. If any one conceal him, and he be hereafter found, his excellency declares, he shall be punished with death, together with his wife, children, and all his family, and his house be razed to the ground.

Bostana, as soon as she had heard this, shut the door as fast as she could, and ran to Assad in the dungeon. Princè, said she, with joy, your troubles are at an end; follow me immediately. She had taken off his fetters the day he was brought in, and the prince followed her into the street, where she cried, There he is, there he is!

The grand vizier, who was not far from the house, returned. Assad knew him to be his brother, ran to him, and embraced him. Amgiad, who immediately recollected him, returned his embrace with

all possible tenderness; made him mount one of his officers' horses, who alighted for that purpose; and conducted him in triumph to the palace, where he presented him to the king, by whom he was advanced to the post of a vizier.

Bostana not wishing to return to her father's house, which was the next day razed to the ground, was sent to the queen's apartments.

The old man her father, Behram, and all their families were brought before the king, who condemned them to be beheaded. They threw themselves at his feet, and implored his mercy. There is no mercy for you to expect, said the king, unless you renounce the adoration of fire, and profess the Mahummedan religion.

They accepted the condition, and were pardoned at the intercession of Assad, in consideration of Bostana's friendship; for whose sake Cavama's life, and the lives of the rest of their families were saved.

Amgiad, in consideration of Behram turning Moosulmaun, and to compensate for the loss which he had suffered before he deserved his favour, made him one of his principal officers, and lodged him in his house. Behram, being informed of Amgiad and his brother Assad's story, proposed to his benefactor, to fit out a vessel to convey them to their father's court: For, said he, the king must certainly have heard of your innocence, and impatiently de-

sire to see you: otherwise we can easily inform him of the truth before we land, and if he is still in the same mind, you can but return.

The two brothers accepted the proposal, communicated it to the king of the city of the magicians, who approved of it; and commanded a ship to be equipped. Behram undertook the employment cheerfully, and soon got in readiness to sail. The two princes, when they understood the ship was ready, waited upon the king to take leave. While they were making their compliments, and thanking the king for his favours, they were interrupted by a great tumult in the city: and presently an officer came to give them notice that a numerous army was advancing against the city; nobody knowing who they were, or whence they had come.

The king being alarmed at the intelligence, Amgiad addressed him thus: Sir, though I have just resigned into your majesty's hands the dignity of your first minister, with which you were pleased to honour me, I am ready to do you all the service in my power. I desire therefore that you would be pleased to let me go and see who this enemy is, that comes to attack you in your capital, without having first declared war.

The king desired him to do so. Amgiad departed immediately, with a very small retinue, to

see what enemy approached, and what was the reason of their coming.

It was not long before prince Amgiad descried the army, which appeared very formidable, and which approached nearer and naerer. The advanced guards received him favourably, and conducted him to a princess, who stopped, and commanded her army to halt, while she talked with the prince; who, bowing profoundly to her, demanded if she came as a friend or an enemy: if as an enemy, what cause of complaint she had against the king his master?

I come as a friend, replied the princess, and have no cause of complaint against the king of the city of the magicians. His territories and mine are so situated, that it is almost impossible for us to have any dispute. I only come to require a slave named Assad, to be delivered up to me. He was carried away by one Behram, a captain of a ship belonging to this city, the most insolent man in the world. I hope your king will do me justice, when he knows I am Margiana.

The prince answered, Mighty queen, the slave whom you take so much pains to seek is my brother: I lost him, and have found him again. Come, and I will deliver him up to you myself; and will do myself the honour to tell you the rest of the story: the king my master will rejoice to see you.

The queen ordered her army to pitch their tents, and encamp where they were; and accompanied prince Amgiad to the city and palace, where he presented her to the king; who received her in a manner becoming her dignity. Assad, who was present, and knew her as soon he saw her, also paid his respects to her. She appeared greatly rejoiced to see him. While they were thus engaged, tidings came, that an army more powerful than the former approached on the other side of the city.

The king of the magicians was more terrified than before, understanding the second army was more numerous than the first, for he saw this by the clouds of dust they raised, which hid the face of the heavens. Amgiad, cried he, what shall we do now? a new army comes to destroy us. Amgiad guessed what the king meant; he mounted on horseback again, and galloped towards the second army. He demanded of the advanced guards to speak with their general, and they conducted him to their king. When he drew near him, he alighted, prostrated himself to the ground, and asked what he required of the king his master.

The monarch replied, I am Gaiour, king of China; my desire to learn tidings of a daughter, whose name is Badoura, whom I married to Kummir al Zummaun, son of Shaw Zummaun, king of the isles of the children of Khaledan, obliged me to leave

my dominions. I suffered that prince to go to see his father, on condition that he came back in a year with my daughter; from that time I have heard nothing of them. Your king will lay an infinite obligation on an afflicted father, by telling him if he knows what is become of them.

Prince Amgiad, perceiving by his discourse that the king was his grandfather, kissed his hand with tenderness, and answered him thus: I hope your majesty will pardon my freedom, when you know that I only pay my duty to my grandfather. I am the son of Kummir al Zummaun, king of the isle of Ebene, and of queen Badoura, for whom you are thus troubled; and I doubt not but they are both in good health in their kingdom.

The king of China, overjoyed to see his grandson, tenderly embraced him. Such a meeting, so happy and unexpected, drew tears from both. The king inquiring on what occasion he had come into a strange country, the prince told him all that had happened to him and his brother Assad. When he had finished his relation, My son, replied the king of China, it is not just that such innocent princes as you are should be longer ill used. Comfort yourself, I will carry you and your brother home, and make your peace. Return, and acquaint your brother with my arrival.

While the king of China encamped in the place

where prince Amgiad met him, the prince returned to inform the king of the magicians, who waited for him impatiently, how he had succeeded.

The king was astonished that so mighty a king as that of China should undertake such a long and troublesome journey, out of a desire to see his daughter. He gave orders to make preparations for his reception, and went forth to meet him.

While these things were transacting, a great dust was seen on another side of the town; and suddenly news was brought of the arrival of a third army, which obliged the king to stop, and to desire prince Amgiad once more to see who they were, and on what account they came.

Amgiad went accordingly, and prince Assad accompanied him. They found it was Kummir al Zummaun their father's army, with whom he was coming to seek for them. He was so grieved for the loss of his sons, that at last emir Jehaun-dar declared that he had saved their lives, which made him resolve to seek for them wherever he was likely to find them.

The afflicted father embraced the two princes with tears of joy, which put an end to those he had a long time shed for grief. The princes had no sooner told him the king of China, his father-in-law, was arrived, than, accompanied by them and a small party, he rode to wait upon him in his camp. They

had not gone far, before they saw a fourth army advancing in good order, which seemed to come from Persia.

Kummir al Zummaun desired the two princes to go and see what army it was, and he would in the meanwhile wait for them. They departed immediately, and coming up to it, were presented to the king to whom the army belonged; and, after having saluted him with due reverence, they demanded on what design he approached so near the king of the magicians capital. The grand vizier, who was present, answered in the name of the king his master, The monarch to whom you speak is Shaw Zummaun, king of the isles of the children of Khaledan, who has a long time travelled, thus attended, to seek his son, who left his dominions many years ago: if you know any thing of him, you cannot oblige him more than by communicating to him all the information in your power.

The princes only replied, That they would shortly bring him an answer, and galloping back as fast as they could, told Kummir al Zummaun that the king his father was approaching with his army.

Wonder, surprise, joy, and grief, had such an effect on Kummir al Zummaun, that he fainted as soon as heard he was so near. Prince Amgiad and prince Assad, by their assiduities, at length brought him to himself; and when he had recovered his

strength, he went to his father's tent, and threw himself at his feet.

Never was there a more affecting interview. Shaw Zummaun gently upbraided his son with unkindness in so cruelly leaving him; and Kummir al Zummaun discovered a hearty sorrow for the fault which love had urged him to commit.

The three kings, and queen Margiana, stayed three days at the court of the king of the magicians, who treated them magnificently. These three days were rendered more remarkable by prince Assad's marriage with queen Margiana, and prince Amgiad with Bostana, for the service she had done his brother Assad.

At length the three kings, and queen Margiana, with her husband Assad, returned to their respective kingdoms. As for Amgiad, the king of the magicians had such an affection for him, he could not part with him; and being very old, he resigned his crown to him. Amgiad, when he had the supreme authority, did his utmost to exterminate the worship of fire, and establish the Mahummedan religion throughout his dominions.

THE STORY OF NOOR AD DEEN[13] AND THE FAIR PERSIAN.

The city of Bussorah was for many years the capital of a kingdom tributary to the caliphs of Arabia. The king who governed it in the days of the caliph Haroon al Rusheed was named Zinebi, who not thinking it proper to commit the administration of his affairs to a single vizier, made choice of two, Khacan and Saouy.

Khacan was of a sweet, generous, and affable temper, and took pleasure in obliging, to the utmost of his power, those with whom he had any business to transact, without violating the justice which it became him to dispense to all. He was therefore universally respected, at court, in the city, and throughout the whole kingdom; and the praises he so highly deserved were the general theme.

Saouy[14] was of a very different character: he was always sullen and morose, and disgusted every body, without regard to their rank or quality. Instead of commanding respect by the liberal distribution of his immense wealth, he was so perfect a miser as to deny himself the necessaries of life. In short, nobody could endure him; and nothing good was said of him. But what rendered him most hateful to the people, was his implacable aversion to Khacan.

He was always putting the worst construction on the actions of that worthy minister, and endeavouring as much as possible to prejudice him with the king.

One day after council, the king of Bussorah amused himself with his two viziers and some other members. The conversation turned upon the female slaves that are daily bought and sold, and who hold among us nearly the same rank with our lawful wives. Some were of opinion, that personal beauty in slaves so purchased was of itself sufficient to render them proper substitutes for wives, which, often on account of alliance or interest in families, men are obliged to marry, though they are not always possessed of any perfection, either of mind or body.

Others maintained, and amongst the rest Khacan, that personal charms were by no means the only qualifications to be desired in a slave; but that they ought to be accompanied with a great share of wit, a cultivated understanding, modesty, and, if possible, every agreeable accomplishment. The reason they gave was, that nothing could be more gratifying to persons on whom the management of important affairs devolved, than, after having spent the day in fatiguing employment, to have a companion in their retirement, whose conversation would be not only pleasing, but useful and instructive: for, in short,

continued they, there is but little difference between brutes and those men who keep a slave only to look at, and to gratify a passion that we have in common with them.

The king entirely concurred in this opinion, and accordingly ordered Khacan to buy him a slave, of perfect beauty, mistress of all the qualifications they had enumerated, and possessed, above all things, of an enlightened understanding.

Saouy, jealous of the honour the king had done Khacan, and differing widely with him in opinion, said, Sire, it will be very difficult to find a slave so accomplished as your majesty requires; and should such a one be discovered, which I scarcely believe possible, she will be cheap at ten thousand pieces of gold. Saouy, replied the king, I perceive plainly you think the sum too great; it may be so for you, though not for me. Then turning to his high treasurer, he ordered him to send the ten thousand pieces of gold to the vizier's house.

Khacan, as soon as he had retured home, sent for all the brokers who used to deal in women-slaves, and strictly charged them, that, if ever they met with one who answered the description he gave them, they should immediately apprise him. The brokers, partly to oblige the vizier, and partly for their own interest, promised to use their utmost endeavours to procure for him one that would accord

with his wishes. Scarcely a day passed but they brought him a slave for his inspection, but he always discovered in each something defective.

One day, early in the morning, as Khacan was mounting his horse to go to court, a broker came to him, and, taking hold of the stirrup with great eagerness, told him a Persian merchant had arrived very late the day before, who had a slave to sell, so surprisingly beautiful that she excelled all the women his eyes had ever beheld; and for wit and knowledge, added he, the merchant engages she shall match the most acute and learned persons of the age.

Khacan, overjoyed at this intelligence, which promised him a favourable opportunity for making his court, ordered him to bring the slave to his palace against his return, and departed.

The broker failed not to be at the vizier's at the appointed hour; and Khacan, finding the lovely slave so much beyond his expectation, immediately gave her the name of the fair Persian. As he had himself much wit and learning, he soon perceived by her conversation, that it was in vain to search further for a slave that surpassed her in any of the qualifications required by the king; and therefore he asked the broker at what sum the Persian merchant valued her.

Sir, replied the broker, he is a man of few words in bargaining, and he tells me, that the very lowest price he will take for her is ten thousand pieces of gold: he has also sworn to me, that, without reckoning his care and pains from the time of his first taking her under his charge, he has laid out nearly that sum on her education in masters to improve her form and cultivate her mind, besides what she has cost him in clothes and maintenance. As he always thought her fit for a king, he has from her infancy, when he first bought her, been sparing of nothing that might contribute towards advancing her to that high distinction. She plays upon all kinds of instruments to perfection; she sings, dances, writes better than the most celebrated authors, makes verses, and there is scarcely any book but she has read; so that there never was a slave so accomplished heard of before.

The vizier Khacan, who could estimate the merits of the fair Persian better than the broker, who only reported what he had heard from the merchant, was unwilling to defer the bargain to a future opportunity, and therefore sent one of his servants to look for the merchant, where the broker told him he was to be found.

As soon as the Persian merchant arrived, It is not for myself, but for the king, said the vizier

Khacan, that I buy your slave; but, nevertheless, you must let him have her at a more reasonable price than you have set upon her.

Sir, replied the merchant, I should do myself unspeakable honour in offering her as a present to his majesty, if it became a person in my situation to make him one of such inestimable value. I ask no more than her education and accomplishments have cost me; and all I have to say is, that I believe his majesty will be extremely pleased with the purchase.

The vizier Khacan would stand no longer bargaining with the merchant, but paid him the money immediately. Sir, said he to the vizier, upon taking his leave of him, since the slave is designed for the king's use, give me leave to tell you, that being extremely fatigued with our long journey, you see her at present under great disadvantage. Though she has not her equal in the world for beauty, yet if you please to keep her at your own house for a fortnight, she will appear quite another creature. You may then present her to the king with honour and credit; for which I hope you will think yourself much obliged to me. The sun, you perceive, has a little injured her complexion; but after two or three times bathing, and when you have dressed her as you think proper, she will be so changed, that she will appear infinitely more charming.

Khacan was pleased with the instructions the

merchant gave him, and resolved to abide by them. He assigned the fair Persian a particular apartment near his lady's, whom he desired to invite her to an entertainment, and thenceforth to treat her as a person designed for the king: he also provided for her several suits of the richest clothes that could be had, and would become her best. Before he took his leave of the fair Persian, he said, Your happiness, madam, cannot be greater than what I am about to procure for you; you shall judge for yourself; it is for the king I have purchased you; and I hope he will be even more pleased with possessing you than I am in having discharged the commission with which his majesty has honoured me. I think it, however, my duty to warn you that I have a son, who, though he does not want wit, is yet young, insinuating, and forward; and to caution you how you suffer him to come near you. The fair Persian thanked him for his advice; and after she had given him an assurance of her intention to follow it, he withdrew.

Noor ad Deen, for so the vizier's son was named, had free access to the apartment of his mother, with whom he usually ate his meals. He was young, handsome in person, agreeable in manners, and firm in his temper; and having great readiness of wit, and fluency of language, was perfect master of the art of persuasion. He saw the fair Persian; and from their first interview, though he knew his father

had bought her purposely for the king, and had so informed him, yet he never used the least endeavour to check the violence of his passion. In short, he resigned himself wholly to the power of her charms, by which his heart was at first captivated; and, from his first conversation with her, resolved to use his utmost endeavours to keep her from the king.

The fair Persian, on her part, had no dislike to Noor ad Deen. The vizier, said she to herself, has done me honour in purchasing me for the king; but I should have thought myself very happy if he had designed me only for his own son.

Noor ad Deen was not remiss in improving the advantage he enjoyed of seeing and conversing with a beauty of whom he was so passionately enamoured; for he would never leave her till obliged by his mother. My son, she would say, it is not proper for a young man like you to be always in the women's apartments; go, mind your studies, and endeavour to qualify yourself to succeed to the honours of your father.

The fair Persian not having bathed for a considerable time on account of the length of her journey, the vizier's lady, five or six days after she was purchased, ordered the bath in her own house to be got ready purposely for her. She sent her to it accompanied by many other women-slaves, who were charged by the vizier's lady to be as attentive

to her as to herself, and, after bathing, to put her on a very rich suit of clothes that she had provided for her. She was the more careful, in order to ingratiate herself with her husband, by letting him see how much she interested herself in every thing that contributed to his pleasure.

As soon as she came out of the bath, the fair Persian, a thousand times more beautiful than she had appeared to Khacan when he bought her, went to visit his lady, who at first hardly knew her. The fair Persian gracefully kissed her hand, and said, Madam, I know not how you like me in this dress you have been pleased to order for me; but your women, who tell me it becomes me so extremely well they should scarcely know me, certainly flatter me. From you alone I expect to hear the truth; but, if what they say be really so, I am indebted to you, madam, for the advantage it has given me.

Oh! my daughter, cried the vizier's lady, transported with joy, you have no reason to believe my women have flattered you; I am better skilled in beauty than they; and, setting aside your dress, which becomes you admirably well, your beauty is so much improved by the bath, that I hardly knew you myself. If I thought the bath was warm enough, I would take my turn; for I am now of an age to require its frequent use. Madam, replied the fair Persian, I have nothing to say to the undeserved

civilities you have been pleased to shew me. As for the bath, it is in fine order; and if you design to go in, you have no time to lose, as your women can inform you.

The vizier's lady, considering that she had not bathed for some days, was desirous to avail herself of that opportunity; and accordingly acquainted her women with her intention, who immediately prepared all things necessary for the occasion. The fair Persian withdrew to her apartment; and the vizier's lady, before she went to bathe, ordered two little female slaves to stay with her, with a strict charge that if Noor ad Deen came, they should not give him admittance.

While the vizier's lady was bathing, and the fair slave was alone in her apartment, Noor ad Deen came in, and not finding his mother in her chamber, went directly towards the fair Persian's, and found the two little slaves in the antechamber. He asked them where his mother was? They told him in the bath. Where is the fair Persian, then? demanded Noor ad Deen. In her chamber, answered the slaves; but we have positive orders from your mother not to admit you.

The entrance into the fair Persian's chamber being only covered with a piece of tapestry, Noor ad Deen went to lift it up, in order to enter, but was opposed by the two slaves, who placed themselves before it,

to stop his passage. He presently caught them both by the arms, and, thrusting them out of the antechamber, locked the door upon them. They immediately ran with loud lamentations to the bath, and with tears in their eyes, told their lady, that Noor ad Deen, having driven them away by force, had gone into the fair Persian's chamber.

The vizier's lady received the account of her son's presumption with the greatest concern. She immediately left the bath, and dressing herself with all possible speed, came directly to the fair Persian's chamber; but before she could get thither, Noor ad Deen had gone away.

The fair Persian was extremely surprised to see the vizier's lady enter her chamber in tears, and in the utmost confusion. Madam, said she, may I presume to ask you the occasion of your concern; and what accident has happened in the bath, to make you leave it so soon?

What! cried the vizier's lady, can you so calmly ask that question, after my son has been with you alone in your chamber? Can there happen a greater misfortune to him or me?

I beseech you, madam, replied the fair slave, what prejudice can this action of Noor ad Deen's do to you or him?

How, returned the vizier's lady, did not my husband tell you that you were designed for the king,

and sufficiently caution you to beware of our son.

I have not forgotten that, madam, replied the fair Persian; but your son came to tell me the vizier his father had changed his purpose, and instead of reserving me for the king, as he first designed, had made him a present of my person. I easily believed him; for, oh! think how a slave as I am, accustomed from my infant years to the laws of servitude, could or ought to resist him! I must own I did it with the less reluctance, on account of the affection for him, which the freedom of our conversation and daily intercourse has excited in my heart. I could without regret resign the hope of ever being the king's, and think myself perfectly happy in spending my whole life with Noor ad Deen.

At this discourse of the fair Persian's, the vizier's lady exclaimed, Would to God that what you say were true! I should hear it with joy; but, believe me, Noor ad Deen has deceived you; for it is impossible his father should ever make him such a present. Ah! wretched youth, how miserable has he made me! and more especially his father, by the dismal consequences we must all expect to share with him! Neither my prayers nor tears will be able to prevail, or obtain a pardon for him; for as soon as his father hears of his violence to you, he will inevitably sacrifice him to his resentment. At these words she

wept bitterly; and the slaves, who were as much alarmed for Noor ad Deen as herself, joined in her tears.

Shortly after the vizier Khacan entered; and being surprised to find his lady and her slaves all in tears, and the fair Persian very melancholy, asked the reason; but instead of answering him, his wife and the slaves continued weeping and lamenting. This astonished him still more; at last, addressing himself to his wife, I command you, said he, to let me know the reason of your tears, and to tell me the whole truth.

The disconsolate lady could no longer refuse to satisfy her husband. Sir, said she, first promise not to use me unkindly on account of what I shall inform you, since I assure you, that what has happened has not been occasioned by any fault of mine. Without waiting for his answer, she then proceeded, Whilst I was bathing with my women, your son seizing that fatal opportunity to ruin us both, came hither, and made the fair Persian believe, that instead of reserving her for the king, you had given her to him as a present. I will not say what he did after such a wicked falsehood, but shall leave you to judge. This is the cause of my affliction, on your account, and his, for whom I want confidence to implore your pardon.

It is impossible to express the vizier Khacan's

distraction at this account of the insolence of his son. Ah! cried he, beating his breast, and tearing his beard, miserable son! unworthy of life! hast thou at last thrown thy father from the highest pinnacle of happiness into a misfortune that must inevitably involve thee also in his ruin? neither will the king be satisfied with thy blood or mine, to avenge the affront offered to his royal person.

His lady endeavoured to comfort him. Afflict yourself no more, said she; I shall easily raise, with part of my jewels, ten thousand pieces of gold, and you may buy another slave, more beautiful and more worthy of the king.

Ah! replied the vizier, could you think me capable of being so extremely afflicted at losing ten thousand pieces of gold? It is not that loss, nor the loss of all I am worth, for that I should not feel; but the forfeiting my honour, more precious than all the riches in the world, that distresses me. However, replied the lady, a loss that can be repaired by money cannot be so very great.

How! exclaimed the vizier; do you not know that Saouy is my mortal enemy; and as soon as this affair comes to his knowledge, do you think he will not insult over me before the king? Your majesty, will he not say to him, is always talking of Khacan's zeal and affection for your service; but see what a proof he has lately given of his claim to the regard

you have hitherto shewn him. He has received ten thousand pieces of gold to buy a slave; and, to do him justice, he has most honourably acquitted himself of that commission, by purchasing the most beautiful that ever eyes beheld; but, instead of bringing her to your majesty, he has thought it better to make a present of her to his son. Here, my son, said he, take this slave, since thou art more worthy of her than the king. Then, with his usual malice, will he not go on, His son has her now entirely in his possession, and every day revels in her arms, without the least disturbance. This, sir, is the exact truth, that I have done myself the honour of acquainting you with; and if your majesty questions my veracity, you may easily satisfy yourself. Do you not plainly see, continued the vizier, how, upon such a malicious insinuation as this, I am every moment liable to have my house forced by the king's guards, and the fair Persian taken from me, besides a thousand other misfortunes that will unavoidably follow? Sir, replied the vizier's lady to her husband, I am sensible the malice of Saouy is very great, and that, if he have but the least intimation of this affair, he will certainly give it a turn very disadvantageous to your interest; but how is it possible that he or any one else should know what has been privately transacted in your family? Suppose it comes to the king's ears, and he should ask you about it;

cannot you say, that upon a strict examination you did not deem the slave so fit for his majesty's use as you had at first thought her; that the merchant has cheated you; that, indeed, she has considerable beauty, but is by no means so accomplished as she had been represented. The king will certainly believe what you say, and Saouy be vexed to the soul, to see all his malicious designs of ruining you disappointed. Take courage then, and, if you will follow my advice, send for all the brokers, tell them you do not like the fair Persian, and order them to be as expeditious as possible in procuring for you another slave.

As this advice appeared rational to the vizier Khacan, and as his passion began to cool, he resolved to abide by it, but his indignation against his son remained as violent as ever.

Noor ad Deen did not make his appearance during the whole of that day, and not daring to hide himself among his young companions, lest his father should search for him in their houses, he went a little way out of town, and took sanctuary in a garden, where he had never been before, and where he was totally unknown. He did not return home till it was very late, when he knew his father was in bed; and then his mother's women, opening the door very softly, admitted him without any noise. He quitted the house again next morning before his father was

stirring; and this plan he pursued for a whole month, to his great mortification. Indeed, the women never flattered him, but told him plainly, his father's anger was not at all diminished, and that he protested if he came into his sight he would certainly kill him.

The vizier's lady learnt from her women that Noor ad Deen slept every night in the house, but she could not summon resolution to supplicate her husband for his pardon. At last, however, she ventured. One day she said to him, I have hitherto been silent, sir, not daring to take the liberty of talking to you about your son; but now give me leave to ask what you design to do with him? It is impossible for a son to have acted more criminally towards a father than he has done, in depriving you of the honour and gratification of presenting to the king a slave so accomplished as the fair Persian. This I acknowledge; but, after all, are you resolved to destroy him, and, instead of a light evil no more to be thought of, to draw upon yourself a far greater than perhaps you at present apprehend? Are you not afraid that the malicious world, which inquires after the reason of your son's absconding, may find out the true cause, which you are so desirous of concealing? Should that happen, you would justly fall into a misfortune, which it is so much your interest to avoid.

Madam, returned the vizier, there is muc' rea-

son in what you have urged; but I cannot think of pardoning our son, till I have mortified him as he deserves. He will be sufficiently mortified, replied the lady, if you will only do what has just suggested itself to my mind. Your son comes home every night after you have retired; he sleeps here, and steals out every morning before you are stirring. Wait for his coming in to-night, make as if you designed to kill him; upon which I will run to his assistance, and when he finds he owes his life entirely to my prayers and intreaties, you may oblige him to take the fair Persian on what condition you please. He loves her, and I am well satisfied the fair slave has no aversion for him.

Khacan readily consented to this stratagem. Accordingly, when Noor ad Deen came at the usual hour, before the door was opened, he placed himself behind it: as soon as he entered, he rushed suddenly upon him, and got him down under his feet. Noor ad Deen, lifting up his head, saw his father with a dagger in his hand, ready to stab him.

At that instant his mother arrived, and catching hold of the vizier's arm, cried, Sir, what are you doing? Let me alone, replied the vizier, that I may kill this base, unworthy son. You shall kill me first, returned the mother; never will I suffer you to imbue your hands in your own blood. Noor ad Deen improved this moment. My father, cried he with

tears in his eyes, I implore your clemency and compassion; nor must you deny me pardon, since I ask it in his name before whom we must all appear at the last day.

Khacan suffered the dagger to be taken out of his hand; and as soon as Noor ad Deen was released, he threw himself at his father's feet, and kissed them, to shew how sincerely he repented of having offended him. Son, said the vizier, return thanks to your mother, since it is for her sake I pardon you. I propose also to give you the fair Persian, on condition that you will bind yourself by an oath not to regard her any longer as a slave, but as your wife; that you will not sell her, nor ever be divorced from her. As she possesses an excellent understanding, and abundantly more wit and prudence than yourself, I doubt not but that she will be able to moderate those rash sallies of youth, which are otherwise so likely to effect your ruin.

Noor ad Deen, who little expected such indulgent treatment, returned his father a thousand thanks, and the fair Persian and he were well pleased with being united to each other.

The vizier Khacan, without waiting for the king's enquiries about the success of the commission he had given him, took particular care to mention the subject often, representing to his majesty the many difficulties he met, and how fearful he was of not

acquitting himself to his majesty's satisfaction. In short, he managed the business with so much address, that the king insensibly forgot it. Though Saouy had gained some intimation of the transaction, yet Khacan was so much in the king's favour, that he was afraid to divulge what he had heard.

This delicate affair had now been kept rather more than a year with greater secrecy than the vizier at first expected, when being one day in the bath, and some important business obliging him to leave it, warm as he was, the air, which was then cold, struck to his breast, caused a defluxion to fall upon his lungs, which threw him into a violent fever, and confined him to his bed. His illness increasing every day, and perceiving he had not long to live, he thus addressed himself to his son, who never quitted him during the whole of his illness—My son, said he, I know not whether I have well employed the riches heaven has blessed me with, but you see they are not able to save me from the hands of death. The last thing I desire of you with my dying breath is, that you would be mindful of the promise you made me concerning the fair Persian, and in this assurance I shall die content.

These were the vizier Khacan's last words. He expired a few moments after, and left his family, the court, and the whole city, in great affliction. The king lamented him as a wise, zealous, and faithful

minister; and the people bewailed him as their protector and benefactor. Never was there a funeral in Bussorah solemnized with greater pomp and magnificence. The viziers, emirs, and in general all the grandees of the court, strove for the honour of bearing his coffin, one after another, upon their shoulders, to the place of burial; and both rich and poor accompanied him, dissolved in tears.

Noor ad Deen exhibited all the demonstrations of a sorrow proportioned to the loss he had sustained, and long refrained from seeing any company. At last he admitted of a visit from an intimate acquaintance. His friend endeavoured to comfort him; and finding him inclined to hear reason, told him, that having paid what was due to the memory of his father, and fully satisfied all that decency required of him, it was now high time to appear again in the world, to converse with his friends, and maintain a character suitable to his birth and talents. For, continued he, though we should sin against the laws both of nature and society, and be thought insensible, if on the death of our fathers we neglected to pay them the duties which filial love imposes upon us; yet having performed these, and put it out of the power of any to reproach us for our conduct, it behoves us to return to the world, and our customary occupations. Dry up your tears then, and reassume that wonted air of gaiety which has always

inspired with joy those who have had the honour of your friendship.

This advice seemed too reasonable to be rejected, and had Noor ad Deen strictly abided by it, he would certainly have avoided all the misfortunes that afterwards befell him. He entertained his friend honourably; and when he took his leave, desired him to come again the next day, and bring with him three or four friends of their acquaintance. By this means he insensibly fell into the society of about ten young men nearly of his own age, with whom he spent his time in continual feasting and entertainments; and scarcely a day passed but he made every one of them some considerable present.

The fair Persian, who never approved of his extravagant way of living, often spoke her mind freely. I question not, said she, but the vizier your father has left you an ample fortune; but great as it may be, be not displeased with your slave for telling you, that at this rate of living you will quickly see an end of it. We may sometimes indeed treat our friends, and be merry with them; but to make a daily practice of it, is certainly the high road to ruin and destruction: for your own honour and reputation, you would do better to follow the footsteps of your deceased father, that in time you may rise to that dignity by which he acquired so much glory and renown.

Noor ad Deen hearkened to the fair Persian with

a smile: and when she had done, My charmer, said he, with the same air of gáiety, say no more of that; let us talk of nothing but mirth and pleasure. In my father's lifetime I was always under restraint; and I am now resolved to enjoy the liberty I so much sighed for before his death. It will be time enough for me hereafter to think of leading the sober, regular life you talk of; and a man of my age ought to taste the pleasures of youth.

What contributed still more to the ruin of Noor ad Deen's fortune, was his unwillingness to reckon with his steward; for whenever he brought in his accounts, he still sent him away without examining them: Go, go, said he, I trust wholly to your honesty; only take care to provide good entertainments for my friends.

You are the master, sir, replied he, and I but the steward; however, you would do well to think upon the proverb, He that spends much, and has but little, must at last insensibly be reduced to poverty. You are not contented with keeping an extravagant table, but you must lavish away your estate with both hands: and were your coffers as large as mountains, they would not be sufficient to maintain you. Begone, replied Noor ad Deen, I want not your grave lessons; only take care to provide good eating and drinking, and trouble your head no farther about the rest.

In the mean time, Noor ad Deen's friends were

constant guests at his table, and never failed to take advantage of the easiness of his temper. They praised and flattered him, extolling his most indifferent actions; but, above all, they took particular care to commend whatever belonged to him; and in this they found their account. Sir, said one of them, I came the other day by your estate that lies in such a place; nothing can be so magnificent or so handsomely furnished as your house; and the garden belonging to it is a paradise upon earth. I am very glad it pleases you, replied Noor ad Deen: bring me pen, ink, and paper; without more words, it is at your service; I make you a present of it. No sooner had others commended one of his houses, baths, or public buildings erected for the use of strangers, the yearly revenue of which was very considerable, than he immediately gave them away. The fair Persian could not forbear stating to him how much injury he did himself; but, instead of paying any regard to her remonstrances, he continued his extravagancies, and the first opportunity that offered, squandered away the little he had left.

In short, Noor ad Deen did nothing for a whole year but feast and make merry, wasting and consuming, with the utmost prodigality, the great wealth that his predecessors, and the good vizier his father, had with so much pains and care acquired and preserved.

The year was but just expired, when a person one day knocked at the door of the hall, where he and his friends were at dinner together by themselves, having sent away the slaves, that they might enjoy the greater liberty.

One of his friends offered to rise; but Noor ad Deen stepping before him, opened the door himself. It was the steward; and Noor ad Deen, going a little out of the hall to know his business, left the door half open.

The friend that offered to rise from his seat, seeing it was the steward, and being curious to know what he had to say, placed himself between the hangings and the door, where he plainly overheard the steward's discourse to his master. Sir, said he, I ask a thousand pardons for coming to disturb you in the height of your pleasure; but what I have to say is of such importance, that I thought myself bound in duty to acquaint you with it. I am come, sir, to make up my last accounts, and to tell you, that what I all along foresaw, and have often warned you of, is at last come to pass. I have not the smallest piece left of all the sums I have received from you for your expences; the other funds you assigned me are all exhausted. The farmers, and those that owe you rent, have made it so plainly appear to me, that you have assigned over to others what they held of you, that it is impossible for me to get any more from them

on your account. Here are my books; if you please, examine them; and if you wish I should continue useful to you, assign me other funds, or else give me leave to quit your service. Noor ad Deen was so astonished at his statement, that he gave him no answer.

The friend who had been listening all this while, and had heard every syllable of what the steward said, immediately came in, and told the company what he had overheard. It is your business, gentlemen, said he, to make your use of this caution; for my part, I declare to you, this is the last visit I design ever to make Noor ad Deen. Nay, replied they, if matters go thus, we have as little business here as you; and for the future shall take care not to trouble him with our company[15].

Noor ad Deen returned presently after; notwithstanding all his efforts to appear gay to his guests, he could not so dissemble his concern, but they plainly perceived the truth of what they had heard. He was scarcely sat down in his place, when one of his friends arose: Sir, said he, I am sorry I cannot have the honour of keeping you company any longer; and therefore I hope you will excuse my rudeness in leaving you so soon. What urgent affair, demanded Noor ad Deen, obliges you to be going so soon? My wife, sir, he replied, is brought to bed to-day; and upon such an occasion, you know a husband's com-

pany is always necessary. So making a very low bow, went away. A minute afterwards a second took his leave, with another excuse. The rest did the same, one after another, till at last not one of the ten friends that had hitherto kept Noor ad Deen company remained.

As soon as they were gone, Noor ad Deen, little suspecting the resolution they had formed never to see him again, went directly to the fair Persian's apartment; to whom he related all the steward had told him, and seemed extremely concerned at the ill state of his affairs. Sir, said the fair Persian, allow me to say, you would never take my advice, but always managed your concerns after your own way, and now you see the fatal consequences. I find I was not mistaken, when I presaged to what a miserable condition you would bring yourself at last: but what afflicts me the more is, that at present you do not see the worst of your misfortunes. Whenever I presumed freely to remonstrate with you, Let us be merry, you replied, and improve the time that Fortune offers us; perhaps she will not always be so prodigal of her favours: but was I to blame in telling you, that we are ourselves the makers of our own fortunes by a prudent management of them? You would not hearken to me; and I was forced, however reluctantly, to let you go on.

I must own, replied Noor ad Deen, was ex-

tremely in the wrong in not following the advice which with such admirable prudence you gave me. It is true, I have spent my estate; but do you not consider, it is among a chosen set of friends, whom I have long known, and who, I am persuaded, have more generosity and gratitude than to abandon me in distress? Sir, replied the fair Persian, if you have nothing but the gratitude of your friends to depend on, your case is desperate; for, believe me, that hope is ill-grounded, and you will tell me so yourself in time.

To this Noor ad Deen replied, Charming Persian, I have a better opinion of my friends' generosity: to-morrow I design to visit them all, before the usual time of their coming hither; and you shall see me return with a round sum that they will assist me with. I am resolved to alter my way of living, and, with the money they lend me, to set up in some business.

Next morning, Noor ad Deen visited his ten friends, who lived in the same street. He knocked at the first door, where one of the richest of them resided. A slave came to the door: but before he would open it, asked who was there? Tell your master, said he to the slave, it is Noor ad Deen, the late vizier Khacan's son. The slave opened the door, and shewed him into a hall, where he left him,

in order to inform his master, who was in an inner room, that Noor ad Deen was come to wait on him. Noor ad Deen! cried he, in a disdainful tone, loud enough for him to hear; go tell him I am not at home; and whenever he may come again, be sure you give him the same answer. The slave returned, and told Noor ad Deen he thought his master was within, but was mistaken.

Noor ad Deen came away in the greatest confusion. Ah! base, ungrateful wretch! cried he, to treat me so to-day after the vows and protestations of friendship that he made me yesterday. He went to another door, but that friend ordered his slave also to say he was gone out. He had the same answer at the third; and, in short, all the rest denied themselves, though every one was at home.

Noor ad Deen now began in earnest to reflect with himself, and see the folly of relying upon the protestations of attachment that his false friends had solemnly made him in the time of his prosperity, when he could treat them sumptuously, and load them with favours. It is true, said he to himself, that a fortunate man, as I was, may be compared to a tree laden with fruit, which, as long as there is any on its boughs, people will be crowding round, and gathering; but as soon as it is stripped of all, they immediately leave it, and go to another. He

smothered his passion as much as possible while he was abroad; but no sooner was he got home than he gave a loose to his affliction, and discovered it to the fair Persian.

The fair Persian seeing him so extremely concerned, guessed he had not found his friends so ready to assist him as he expected. Well, sir, said she, are you now convinced of the truth of what I told you? Ah! cried he, thou hast been too true a prophetess; for not one of them would know me, see me, or speak to me. Who could ever have believed, that persons so highly obliged to me, and on whom I have spent my estate, could have used me so ungratefully? I am distracted; and I fear shall commit some action unworthy myself, in the deplorable and desperate condition I am reduced to, unless you assist me with your prudent advice. Sir, replied the fair Persian, I see no other way of supporting yourself in your misfortunes, but selling off your slaves and furniture, and living on the money they produce, till heaven points out some other means to deliver you from your present misery.

Noor ad Deen was loth to resort to this expedient; but what could he do in the necessitous circumstances to which he was reduced? He first sold off his slaves, those unprofitable mouths, which would have been a greater expence to him than in his present condition he could bear. He lived on the

money for some time; and when it was spent, ordered his goods to be carried into the market-place, where they were sold for half their value, though there were among them several articles that had cost immense sums. Upon the produce of these he lived a considerable time; but this supply failing at last, he had nothing left by which he could raise any more money, of which he informed the fair Persian in the most sorrowful expressions.

Noor ad Deen little expected the answer this prudent woman made him. Sir, said she, I am your slave; and the late vizier your father gave ten thousand pieces of gold for me. I know I am a little sunk in value since that time; but I believe I shall sell for pretty near that sum. Let me intreat you then instantly to carry me to the market, and expose me to sale; and with the money that you get for me, which will be very considerable, you may turn merchant in some city where you are not known, and by that means find a way of living, if not in splendour, yet with happiness and content.

Lovely and adorable Persian! cried Noor ad Deen, is it possible you can entertain such a thought? Have I given you such slender proofs of my love, that you should think me capable of so base an action? But suppose me so vile a wretch, could I do it without being guilty of perjury, after the oath I have taken to my late father never to sell

you? I would sooner die than break it, and part with you, whom I love infinitely beyond myself; though, by the unreasonable proposal you have made me, you shew me that your love is by no means reciprocal.

Sir, replied the fair Persian, I am convinced that your passion for me is as sincere as you express; and heaven, who knows with what reluctance I have made this proposal which induces you to think so hardly of me, is my witness, that mine is as great as yours; but to silence your reasons, I need only bid you remember, that necessity has no law. I love you to that degree that it is impossible for you to love me more; and be assured, that to what master soever I shall belong, my love for you will continue undiminished; and if you are ever able to redeem me, as I hope you may, it will be the greatest pleasure in the world to be restored to you again. I confess it is a fatal and cruel necessity to which we are driven; but I see no other way of freeing ourselves from the misery that involves us both.

Noor ad Deen, convinced of the truth of what the fair Persian had said, and that there was no other way of avoiding a shameful poverty, was forced to yield to her proposal. Accordingly he led her to the market where the women-slaves are exposed to sale, with a regret that cannot easily be expressed.

He applied himself to a broker, named Hagi Hassan. Hagi Hassan, said he, here is a slave whom I mean to sell; what will they give for her?

Hagi Hassan desired Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian to walk into a room; and when she had pulled off the veil that covered her face, Sir, said Hagi Hassan, in surprise, if I am not mistaken, this is the slave your father, the late vizier, gave ten thousand pieces of gold for? Noor ad Deen assured him she was the same; and Hagi Hassan gave him some hopes of selling her at a high price, and promised to use all his art to raise her value as high as he could.

Hagi Hassan and Noor ad Deen went out of the room; and Hagi Hassan locked the fair Persian in. He went immediately to the merchants; but they being busy in buying slaves from different countries, Greeks, Franks, Africans, Tartars, and others, he was forced to wait till the market was over. When the sale was ended, and the greatest part of them were got together again, My masters, said he to them, with an air of gaiety in his looks and actions, every thing that is round is not a nut, every thing that is long is not a fig, all that is red is not flesh, and all eggs are not fresh; it is true you have seen and bought a great many slaves in your lives, but you never yet saw one comparable to her I am going

to tell you of. She is the very pearl of slaves. Come, follow me, you shall see her yourselves, and judge at what rate I shall cry her.

The merchants followed Hagi Hassan into the apartment where he had left the fair Persian, and as soon as they beheld her were so surprised at her beauty, that they unanimously agreed, four thousand pieces of gold was the very lowest price they could set upon her. The merchants left the room; and Hagi Hassan, who came out with them, without going any farther, proclaimed with a loud voice, Four thousand pieces of gold for a Persian slave.

None of the merchants had yet offered any thing, and were consulting together about what they might afford to give for her, when the vizier Saouy appeared. Perceiving Noor ad Deen in the market, he said to himself, Noor ad Deen is certainly still making money of his goods (for he knew he had exposed them to sale), and is come hither to buy a slave with the product. He advanced forward just as Hagi Hassan began to proclaim a second time, Four thousand pieces of gold for a Persian slave.

The vizier Saouy, who concluded by the high price, that the slave must be extraordinarily beautiful, was very desirous to see her; so spurring his horse forward, he rode up to Hagi Hassan, who was surrounded by the merchants. Open the door, said he, and let me see the slave. It was not the custom

to shew a slave to a particular person after the merchants had seen her, and were treating for her; but none of them durst dispute their right with the vizier; and Hagi Hassan was obliged to open the door, and he made a sign to the fair Persian to come forward, that Saouy might see her, without alighting from his horse.

The vizier was astonished at the sight of so beautiful a slave; and knowing the broker's name, (having formerly dealt with him), Hagi Hassan, said he, is it not at four thousand pieces of gold that you cry her? Yes, sir, answered he; the merchants just now agreed that I should put her up at that price: I wait their advance; and I question not but they will give a great deal more.

If no one offers more, I will give that sum, replied Saouy, looking at the merchants at the same time with a countenance that forbad them to advance the price. He was so universally dreaded, that no one durst speak a word, even to complain of his encroaching upon their privilege.

The vizier having stayed some time, and finding none of the merchants outbid him, What do you stay for? said he to Hagi Hassan. Enquire after the seller, and strike a bargain with him at four thousand pieces of gold, or ask if he demands more.

Hagi Hassan having locked the chamber-door, went to confer with Noor ad Deen. Sir, said he to

him, I am very sorry to bring you the ill news of your slave's going to be sold for nothing. How so? replied Noor ad Deen. Why, sir, continued Hagi Hassan, you must know, that the business at first went on well; for as soon as the merchants had seen your slave, they ordered me, without hesitation, to cry her at four thousand pieces of gold; accordingly I cried her at that price, but presently the vizier Saouy came, and his presence has stopped the mouths of all the merchants, who seemed disposed to raise her, at least to the same price your deceased father gave for her. Saouy will give no more than four thousand pieces; and it is much against my inclination that I am come to tell you his despicable offer. The slave indeed is your own; but I will never advise you to part with her upon those terms, since you and every one else are sensible of her being worth infinitely more; besides, he is base enough to contrive a way to trick you out of the money.

Hagi Hassan, replied Noor ad Deen, I am highly obliged to thee for thy advice: do not think I will ever sell my slave to any enemy of our family; my necessities, indeed, are at present very great; but I would sooner die in the utmost poverty than consent to delivering her up to him. I have only one thing to beg of thee, who art skilful in all the turns and shifts of sale, that thou wouldst put me in a way to prevent the completion of the bargain.

Sir, said Hagi Hassan, nothing is more easy: you must pretend, that, being in a violent passion with your slave, you swore to expose her in the market, and for the sake of your oath have now brought her hither, without any intention of selling her. This will satisfy every one; and Saouy will have nothing to say against it. Come along with me then; and just as I am presenting her to Saouy, as if it were by your own consent, pull her to you, give her two or three blows, and send her home. I thank thee for thy counsel, said Noor ad Deen, and will make use of it.

Hagi Hassan went back to the chamber; and having privately acquainted the fair Persian with their design, that she might not be surprised, took her by the hand, and led her to the vizier Saouy, who was still on horseback at the door. Sir, said he, here is the slave, she is yours, take her.

The words were scarcely out of Hagi Hassan's mouth, when Noor ad Deen, catching hold of the fair Persian, pulled her to him, and giving her a box on the ear, Come hither, impertinence, said he, and get you home again; for though your ill-humour obliged me to swear I should bring you hither, yet I never intended to sell you: I have business for you to do yet; and it will be time enough to part with you when I have nothing else left.

This conduct of Noor ad Deen put the vizier

Saouy into a violent passion. Miserable debauchee, cried he, wouldst thou have me believe thou hast any thing else left to make money of but thy slave? and at the same instant, spurring his horse directly against him, endeavoured to carry off the fair Persian. Noor ad Deen, nettled to the quick at the affront the vizier had put upon him, quitted the fair Persian, and laying hold of his horse's bridle, made him run two or three paces backwards. Vile dotard, said he to the vizier, I would tear thy soul out of thy body this moment, were it not out of respect for the crowd of people here present.

The vizier Saouy being hated by all, there was not one among them but was pleased to see Noor ad Deen mortify him; and by signs they gave him to understand, that he might revenge himself upon him as much as he pleased, for nobody would interfere in their quarrel.

Saouy endeavoured to force Noor ad Deen to quit the bridle; but he being a lusty vigorous man, and encouraged by those that stood by, pulled him off his horse, gave him several blows, and dashed his head against the stones, till it was all over blood. The slaves who waited upon the vizier would have drawn their cimeters, and fallen upon Noor ad Deen; but the merchants interposing prevented them. What do you mean? said they to them; do you not see that one is a vizier, the other a vizier's son? Let

them fight it out; perhaps they will be reconciled one time or another; whereas, if you had killed Noor ad Deen, your master, with all his greatness, could not have been able to protect you against the law.

Noor ad Deen having given over beating the vizier Saouy, left him in the mire, and taking the fair Persian, marched home with her, attended by the people, with shouts and acclamations for the action he had performed.

The vizier, cruelly bruised with the blows he had received, made shift to get up, with the assistance of his slaves, and had the mortification to see himself besmeared with blood and dirt. He leaned on the shoulders of two slaves, and in that condition went straight to the palace in the sight of all the people, with the greater confusion, because no one pitied him. As soon as he reached the king's apartment, he began to cry out, and call for justice in a lamentable tone. The king ordered him to be admitted; and asked who it was that had abused and put him into that miserable plight. Sire, cried Saouy, it is the favour of your majesty, and being admitted into your sacred councils, that has occasioned me to be so barbarously treated. Say no more of that, replied the king, only let me hear the whole story simply, and who the offender is; and if he is in the wrong, you may depend upon it he shall be severely punished.

Sire, said Saouy, telling the whole matter to his

own advantage, having occasion for a cook, I went to the market of women-slaves to buy one: when I came thither, there was a slave just cried at four thousand pieces of gold; I ordered them to bring her before me, and I think my eyes never did nor will behold a more beautiful creature: I had no sooner examined her beauty with the highest satisfaction, than I immediately asked to whom she belonged; and upon enquiry found that Noor ad Deen, son to the late vizier Khacan, had the disposing of her.

Your majesty may remember, that about two or three years ago, you gave that vizier ten thousand pieces of gold, strictly charging him to buy you a slave with that sum. The money, indeed, was laid out upon this very slave; but instead of bringing her to your majesty, thinking his son deserved her better, he made him a present of her. Noor ad Deen, since his father's death, having wasted his whole fortune in riot and feasting, has nothing left but this slave, whom he at last resolved to part with; and she was to be sold in his name. I sent for him; and, without mentioning any thing of his father's prevarication, or rather treachery, to your majesty, I in the civilest manner said to him, Noor ad Deen, the merchants, I perceive, have put your slave up at four thousand pieces of gold; and I question not, but, in emulation of each other, they will raise the price considerably: let me have her for the four thousand pieces; I am

going to buy her for the king our lord and master; this will be a handsome opportunity of making your court to him; and his favour will be worth far more than the merchants can propose to give you.

Instead of returning me a civil answer, the insolent wretch, beholding me with a fierce air, Impotent villain, said he, I would rather give my slave to a Jew for nothing than to thee for money. Noor ad Deen, I replied, without passion, though I had some reason to be a little warm, you do not consider, that by talking in this manner you affront the king, who raised both your father and me to the honours we have enjoyed.

This admonition, instead of softening him, only provoked him to a higher degree; so that, falling upon me like a madman, without regard to my age or rank, he pulled me off my horse, and put me into this miserable plight. I beseech your majesty to consider, that it is on your account I have been so publicly affronted.

The abused king, highly incensed against Noor ad Deen by this relation, so full of malice and artifice, discovered by his countenance the violence of his anger; and turning to the captain of his guards, who stood near him, Take forty of your soldiers, said he, immediately plunder Noor ad Deen's house, and having ordered it to be razed to the ground, bring him and his slave to the presence.

Before the captain of the guards was gone out of the king's presence, an officer belonging to the court, who overheard the order given, hastened out. His name was Sangiar; and he had been formerly a slave of the vizier Khacan, who had introduced him at court, where by degrees he had raised himself.

Sangiar, full of gratitude to his old master and affection for Noor ad Deen, whom he remembered a child, being no stranger to Saouy's hatred of Khacan's family, could not hear the order without concern. This action, said he to himself, may not be altogether so black as Saouy has represented it. He has prejudiced the king against him, who will certainly put him to death, without allowing him time to justify himself. He made so much haste to Noor ad Deen's house, as to get thither soon enough to acquaint him with what had passed at court, and give him time to provide for his own and the fair Persian's safety. He knocked so violently at the door, that Noor ad Deen, who had been a great while without any servant, ran immediately to open it. My dear lord, said Sangiar, there is no safety for you in Bussorah; you must lose no time, but depart hence this moment.

How so? demanded Noor ad Deen. What is the reason I must be gone so soon? Make haste away, sir, replied Sangiar, and take your slave with you. In short, Saouy has been just now acquainting the

king, after his own way of telling it, all that passed between you and him; and the captain of the guards will be here in an instant, with forty soldiers, to seize you and the fair Persian. Take these forty pieces of gold to assist you in repairing to some place of safety. I would give you more if I had it about me. Excuse my not staying any longer; I leave you with reluctance. Sangiar gave Noor ad Deen but just time to thank him, and departed.

Noor ad Deen acquainted the fair Persian with the absolute necessity of their going that moment. She only put on her veil; they both stole out of the house, and were fortunate enough not only to get clear of the city, but also safely to arrive at the Euphrates, which was not far off, where they embarked in a vessel that lay ready to weigh anchor.

As soon as they were on board, the captain came on deck amongst his passengers. Children, said he to them, are you all here? have any of you any more business to do in the city? or have you left any thing behind you? They were all there, they answered him, and ready; so that he might sail as soon as he pleased. When Noor ad Deen came aboard, the first question he asked was, Whither the vessel was bound? and being told for Bagdad, he rejoiced at it. The captain, having weighed anchor, set sail; and the vessel, with a very favourable wind, lost sight of Bussorah.

The captain of the guards came to Noor ad Deen's house, and knocked at the door; but no one answering, he ordered his soldiers to break it open, who immediately obeyed him, and rushed in. They searched the house; but neither he nor the fair Persian were to be found. The captain of the guards made them inquire of the neighbours; and he himself asked if they had seen them lately. It was all in vain; for if they had seen him go out of his house, so universally beloved was Noor ad Deen by the people, that not one of them would have said the least word to his prejudice. While they were rifling the house, and levelling it to the ground, he went to acquaint the king with the news. Look for them, said he, every where; for I am resolved to have them.

The captain of the guards made a second search, and the king dismissed the vizier Saouy with honour. Go home, said he, trouble yourself no farther to punish Noor ad Deen; I will revenge your injuries.

Without delay the king ordered to be proclaimed throughout the whole city a reward of a thousand pieces of gold for any person that should apprehend Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian, also a severe punishment upon those who should conceal them. No tidings however could be heard of them; and the vizier Saouy had only the comfort of seeing the king espouse his quarrel.

In the mean time, Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian, after a prosperous voyage, landed safe at Bagdad. As soon as the captain came within sight of that city, pleased that his voyage was at an end, Rejoice, my children, cried he to the passengers, yonder is that great and wonderful city, where there is a perpetual concourse of people from all parts of the world: there you shall meet with innumerable crowds, and never feel the extremity of cold in winter, nor the excess of heat in summer, but enjoy an eternal spring with all its flowers, and the delicious fruits of autumn.

When the vessel came to anchor, a little below the city, the passengers went ashore, each to their respective place of abode. Noor ad Deen gave the captain five pieces of gold for his passage, and went ashore also with the fair Persian; but being a perfect stranger in Bagdad, was at a loss for a lodging. They rambled a considerable time along the gardens that bordered on the Tigris, and keeping close to one of them that was enclosed with a very long wall, at the end of it they turned into a street well paved, where they perceived a magnificent gateway and a fountain near it.

The inner door happened to be shut, but the portal was open, in which there was an estrade on each side. This is a very convenient place for us, said Noor ad Deen to the fair Persian; night comes

on apace; and though we have eaten nothing since our landing, I am for passing the night here, and to-morrow we shall have time enough to look for a lodging. Sir, replied the fair Persian, you know your wishes are mine; let us go no farther, since you are willing to stay here. Each of them having drunk a draught of water at the fountain, they laid themselves down upon one of the estrades; and after a little chat, being soothed by the agreeable murmur of the water, fell asleep.

The garden belonged to the caliph: and in the middle of it there was a pavilion, called the pavilion of pictures, because its chief ornaments were pictures, after the Persian manner, drawn by the most celebrated painters in Persia, whom the caliph had sent for on purpose. The stately hall within this pavilion was lighted by fourscore arches, and a lustre in each; but these were lighted only when the caliph came thither to spend the evening. On such occasions they made a glorious illumination, and could be seen at a great distance in the country on that side, and by great part of the city.

The office of keeper of this pleasure-house was at this time held by a very aged officer, named Scheich Ibrahim, whom the caliph, for some important service, had put into that employment, with strict charge not to let all sorts of people in, but especially to suffer no one either to sit or lie down

on the estrades at the outward door, that they might always be clean; and whenever he found any body there, to punish them severely.

Some business had obliged this officer to go abroad, and he was not yet returned. When he came back, there was just day-light enough for him to discern two persons asleep upon one of the estrades, with their heads under a piece of linen, to defend them from the gnats. Very well, said Scheich Ibrá-him to himself, these people disobey the caliph's orders: but I will take care to teach them better manners. Upon this he opened the door very softly, and a moment after returned with a cane in his hand, and his sleeve tucked up to the elbow: he was just going to lay on them both with all his might, but withholding his arm, began to reason with him-self after this manner: Thou wast going, without reflection, to strike these people, who perhaps are strangers, destitute of a lodging, and utterly ignorant of the caliph's order; so that it would be advisable to know first who they are. Upon this he gently lifted up the linen that covered their heads, and was astonished to see a young man so well shaped, and a young woman so beautiful; he then waked Noor ad Deen, by pulling him softly by the feet.

Noor ad Deen, lifting up his head, and seeing an old man with a long white beard standing at his feet, got up, and throwing himself upon his knees, and

taking his hand, kissed it. Good father, said he, Heaven preserve you! What do you want, my son? replied Scheich Ibrahim; who are you, and whence came you? We are strangers newly arrived, answered Noor ad Deen; and would fain tarry here till to-morrow. This is not a proper place for you, said Scheich Ibrahim; come in with me, and I will find one fitter for you to sleep in than this; and the sight of the garden, which is very fine, will please you, when you see it to-morrow by day-light. Is this garden your own? said Noor ad Deen. Yes, replied Scheich Ibrahim, smiling; it is an inheritance left me by my father: pray walk in, for I am sure you will not repent seeing it.

Noor ad Deen rose to thank Scheich Ibrahim for the civility he had shewn; as did afterwards the fair Persian, and they entered the garden. Scheich Ibrahim locked the door, and going before, led them to a spot from whence, at one view, they might see the disposition, grandeur, and beauty of the whole.

Noor ad Deen had seen very fine gardens, but never any comparable to this. Having satisfied his curiosity, as he was walking in one of the walks, he turned about to the officer, and asked his name. As soon as he had told him it was Scheich Ibrahim; Scheich Ibrahim, said he to him, I must confess this is a charming garden indeed. Heaven send you long to enjoy the pleasures of it; we cannot suf-

ficiently thank you for the favour you have done by shewing us a place so well worth seeing: however, it is but just that we should make you some amends for your kindness; here are two pieces of gold; take them, and get us something to eat, that we may be merry together.

At the sight of the two pieces of gold, Scheich Ibrahim, who was a great admirer of that metal, laughed in his sleeve: he took them, and leaving Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian by themselves, went to provide what was necessary; for he was alone. Said he to himself with great joy, These are generous people; I should have done very wrong, if, through imprudence, I had ill-treated and driven them away. A tenth part of the money will suffice to treat them; and the rest I will keep for my pains.

While Scheich Ibrahim was gone to fetch something for his own supper, as well as for his guests, Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian walked up and down the garden, till at last they came to the pavilion of pictures. They stood awhile to admire its wonderful structure, size, and loftiness; and after taking a full view of it on every side, went up many steps of fine white marble to the hall-door, which they found locked.

They were but just returned to the bottom of the steps, when Scheich Ibrahim arrived, loaded with

provisions. Scheich Ibrahim, said Noor ad Deen, in great surprise, did you not tell us that this was your garden? I did, replied Scheich Ibrahim, and do so still. And does this magnificent pavilion also belong to you? Scheich Ibrahim was staggered at this unexpected question. If, said he to himself, I should say it is none of mine, they will ask me how I can be master of the garden, and not of the pavilion? As he had made them believe the garden was his, he said the same of the pavilion. My son, said he, the pavilion is not distinct from the garden; but they both belong to me. If so, said Noor ad Deen, since you invite us to be your guests to-night, do us the favour to shew us the inside of it; for if we may judge by the outward appearance, it must certainly be extraordinarily magnificent.

It would have been a great piece of incivility in Scheich Ibrahim to refuse this favour, after what he had already done: moreover, he considered that the caliph not having given him notice, according to his usual custom, it was likely he would not be there that night, and therefore resolved to treat his guests, and sup with them in the pavilion. He laid the provision on the first step, while he went to his apartment for the key: he soon returned with a light, and opened the door.

Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian entered the hall, and were never tired with admiring the beauty

and richness of the place. Indeed, without saying any thing of the pictures, which were admirably well drawn, the sofas were very noble and costly; and besides lustres suspended from every arch, there was between each a silver branch supporting a wax candle. Noor ad Deen could not behold these glorious objects without recollecting his former splendour, and sighing.

In the mean time Scheich Ibrahim was getting supper ready; and the cloth being laid upon a sofa, and every thing in order, Noor ad Deen, the fair Persian, and he, sat down and ate together. When supper was finished, and they had washed their hands, Noor ad Deen opened a lattice, and calling the fair Persian to him, Come hither, said he, and with me admire the charming prospect and beauty of the garden by moon-light; nothing can be more agreeable. She came to him; and they both enjoyed the view, while Scheich Ibrahim was busy in taking away the cloth.

When Scheich Ibrahim came to his guests again, Noor ad Deen asked him whether he had any liquor to treat them with? What liquor would you have? replied Scheich Ibrahim—Sherbet? I have the best in the world; but sherbet, you know, my son, is never drunk after supper.

I know that very well, said Noor ad Deen; it is not sherbet, but another sort of liquor that we ask

you for, and I am surprised at your not understanding me. It is wine then you mean? said Scheich Ibrahim. You guess right, replied Noor ad Deen, and if you have any, oblige us with a bottle: you know a bottle after supper is a very proper companion to spend the hours with till bed-time.

Heaven defend me from keeping wine in my house, cried Scheich Ibrahim, and from ever coming to a place where any is found! A man who, like me, has been a pilgrimage four times to Mecca, has renounced wine for ever.

You would do us a singular kindness, said Noor ad Deen, in getting a little for our own drinking; and if it be not too much trouble, I will put you in a way how you may do it, without going into a vintner's shop, or so much as laying your hand upon the vessel that contains it. Upon that condition I will do it, replied Scheich Ibrahim, only let me know what I am to do.

Why then, said Noor ad Deen, we just now saw an ass tied at the entrance of your garden, which certainly must be yours, and which you may make use of in this extremity: here are two pieces of gold more; take them, and lead your ass with the panniers to the next vintner's; you may stand at as great a distance as you please, do but give something to the first person that comes by, and desire him to go with your ass, and procure two pitchers of wine; put

one in one pannier, in another, another, which he must pay for out of the money you give him, and so let him bring the ass back to you: you will have nothing to do, but to drive the beast hither before you; we will take the wine out of the panniers: by this means you will do nothing that will give you any scruple.

The two last pieces of gold that Scheich Ibrahim was going to receive wrought wonderfully upon his mind. Ah! my son, cried he, you have an excellent contrivance; and had it not been for your invention, I should never have thought of this way of getting you some wine without any scruple of conscience. Away he went to execute the orders, which he did in a little time; and, upon his return, Noor ad Deen, taking the pitchers out of the panniers, carried them into the hall.

Scheich Ibrahim, having led the ass to the place from whence he took him, came back again. Scheich Ibrahim, said Noor ad Deen, we cannot enough thank you for the trouble we have already given you; but we want something yet. What is that? replied Scheich: what more service can I do you? We have no cups to drink out of, said Noor ad Deen, and a little fruit, if you had any, would be very acceptable. Do but say what you have a mind to, replied Scheich Ibrahim, and you shall have every thing to your heart's content.

Down went Scheich Ibrahim, and in a short time spread a carpet for them with beautiful porcelain dishes, full of all sorts of delicious fruits, besides gold and silver cups to drink out of; and having asked them if they wanted any thing else, he withdrew, though they pressed him earnestly to stay.

Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian sat down again, and drank each a cup. They were pleased with the wine, which was excellent. Well, my dear, said Noor ad Deen to the fair Persian, are we not the most fortunate persons in the world, after so many dangers, to meet with so charming and agreeable a place? Let us be merry, and think no more on the hardships of our voyage. Can my happiness be greater in this world, than to have you on one side of me, and my glass on the other? They drank freely, and diverted themselves with agreeable conversation, each singing a song.

Both having very fine voices, but especially the fair Persian, their singing attracted Scheich Ibrahim, who had stood hearkening a great while on the steps, without discovering himself. He could contain himself no longer; but thrusting his head in at the door, Courage, sir, said he to Noor ad Deen, whom he took to be quite drunk, I am glad to see you so pleased.

Ah! Scheich Ibrahim, cried Noor ad Deen, turning to him, you are a glorious man, and we are

extremely obliged to you. We dare not ask you to drink a cup; but walk in; come, sit down, and let us have the honour at least of your company. Go on, go on, said Scheich Ibrahim; the pleasure of hearing your songs is sufficient for me. Upon this he immediately retired.

The fair Persian perceiving Scheich Ibrahim, through one of the windows, standing upon the steps, told Noor ad Deen of it. Sir, said she, you see what an aversion he has for wine; yet I question not in the least to make him drink, if you will do as I would have you. Noor ad Deen asked her what it was. Do but say the word, replied he, and I am ready to do what you please. Prevail with him then only to come in, and bear us company; some time after fill up a bumper, and give it him; if he refuses, drink it yourself, pretend to be asleep, and leave the rest to me.

Noor ad Deen understood the fair Persian's design, and called to Scheich Ibrahim, who came again to the door. Scheich Ibrahim, said he, we are your guests; you have entertained us in the most obliging manner, and will you now refuse our solicitations to honour us with your company? We do not ask you to drink, but only the favour of seeing you.

Scheich Ibrahim being at last prevailed upon, came into the hall, and sat down on the edge of a sofa nearest to the door. You do not sit well there,

said Noor ad Deen, and we cannot have the honour of seeing you; pray come nearer, and sit you down by the lady; she will like it much. I will obey you, replied Scheich Ibrahim; so coming forward, simpering, to think he should be seated near so beautiful a creature, he placed himself at some distance from the fair Persian. Noor ad Deen desired a song of her, in return for the honour Scheich Ibrahim had done them; and she sung one that charmed him.

When the fair Persian had ended her song, Noor ad Deen poured out a cup of wine, and presented it to Scheich Ibrahim. Scheich Ibrahim, said he, I intreat you, drink this to our healths. Sir, replied he, starting back, as if he abhorred the very sight of the wine, I beseech you to excuse me; I have already told you that I have forsworn the use of wine these many years. Then since you will not drink our healths, said Noor ad Deen, give me leave to drink yours.

While Noor ad Deen was drinking, the fair Persian cut half an apple, and presented it to Scheich Ibrahim. Though you refused drinking, said she, yet I believe you will not refuse tasting this apple; it is very excellent. Scheich Ibrahim had no power to refuse it from so fair a hand; but taking it with a very low bow, put it in his mouth. She said a great many pleasant things on the occasion; and Noor ad Deen, falling back upon a sofa, pretended to fall fast

asleep. The fair Persian presently advanced towards Scheich Ibrahim, and speaking in a low voice, Look at him, said she, thus in all our merry parties he constantly serves me; and no sooner has he drunk a cup or two, but he falls asleep, and leaves me alone; but I hope you will have the goodness to keep me company till he awakes.

At this the fair Persian took a cup, and filling it with wine, offered it to Scheich Ibrahim. Here, said she, drink off this to my health; I am going to pledge you. Scheich Ibrahim made a great many difficulties, and begged her to excuse him from drinking; but she pressed him so, that, overcome by her charms and intreaties, he took the cup, and drank off every drop of the wine.

The good old man loved a chirruping cup to his heart, but was ashamed to drink among strangers. He often went to the tavern in private, as many other people do; and he did not take the precaution recommended, but went directly where he was well known (night serving him instead of a cloak), and saved the money that Noor ad Deen had ordered him to give the messenger who was to have gone for the wine.

While Scheich Ibrahim was eating fruit after his draught, the fair Persian filled him out another, which he received with less difficulty than the former, but made none at all at the third. In short, a fourth

was quaffing, when Noor ad Deen started up from his pretended sleep; and bursting out into a violent fit of laughter, and looking at him, Ha! ha! said he, Scheich Ibrahim, have I caught you at last? did you not tell me you had forsworn wine, and now you have drunk it all up from me?

Scheich Ibrahim, not expecting to be surprised, blushed a little; however, that did not spoil his draught; but when he had done, Sir, said he laughing, if there is any crime in what I have done, it lies at this fair lady's door, not mine: for who could possibly resist so many charms?

The fair Persian, who perfectly understood Noor ad Deen, took Scheich Ibrahim's part. Let him talk, said she, Scheich Ibrahim, take no notice of him, but let us drink on and be merry. Awhile after Noor ad Deen filled out a cup for himself and the fair Persian; but when Sheich Ibrahim saw that Noor ad Deen had forgotten him in his turn, he took his cup, and presenting it to the fair Persian, Madam, said he, do you suppose I cannot drink as well as you?

At these words Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian laughed very heartily. They poured him out some wine; and sat laughing, chatting, and drinking, till near midnight. About that hour the fair Persian began to notice that there was but one candle on the carpet. Scheich Ibrahim, said she to the good

old officer, you have afforded us but one candle, when there are so many wax-lights yonder; pray do us the favour to light some of them, that we may see a little better what we are doing.

Scheich Ibrahim making use of the liberty that wine inspires when it gets into the head, and not caring to be interrupted in his discourse, bade the fair Persian light them herself. It is fitter for a young person like you to do it, said he, than for me; but be sure not to light above five or six. Up rose the fair Persian immediately, and taking a wax candle in her hand, lighted it with that which stood upon the carpet, and without any regard to Scheich Ibrahim's order, lighted up the whole fourscore.

By and by, while Scheich Ibrahim was entertaining the fair Persian with some discourse, Noor ad Deen took his turn to desire him to light up some of the candles in the lustres, not taking notice that all the wax-lights were already in a blaze. Certainly, replied Scheich Ibrahim, you must be very lazy, or less vigorous than I am, that you are not able to light them yourself: get you gone, and light them; but be sure you light no more than three. To work he went; but instead of that number, he lighted them all, and opened the shutters of the fourscore windows, before Scheich Ibrahim, who was deeply engaged with the fair Persian, knew any thing of the matter.

The caliph Haroon al Rusheed being not yet gone to rest, was in a room of his palace on the river Tigris, from whence he could command a view both of the garden and pavilion. He accidentally opened the casement, and was extremely surprised at seeing the pavilion illuminated; and at first, by the greatness of the light, thought the city was on fire. The grand vizier Jaaffier was still with him, waiting for his going to rest. The caliph, in a great rage, called the vizier to him. Careless vizier, said he, come hither, come hither; look at the pavilion of pictures, and tell me the reason of its being illuminated at this hour, now I am not there.

The grand vizier at this account fell into a violent trembling; but when he came nearer, and with his own eyes saw the truth of what the caliph had told him, he was more alarmed than before. Some excuse must be made to appease the caliph's anger. Commander of the true believers, said he, all that I can say to your majesty about this matter is, that some five or six days ago Scheich Ibrahim came to acquaint me, that he had a design to assemble the ministers of his mosque, to assist at a ceremony he was ambitious of performing in honour of your majesty's auspicious reign. I asked him if I could be any way serviceable to him in this affair; upon which he intreated me to get leave of your majesty to perform the ceremony in the pavilion. I sent him

away with leave to hold the assembly, telling him I would take care to acquaint your majesty with it; and I ask pardon for having quite forgotten it. Scheich Ibrahim, continued he, has certainly made choice of this day for the ceremony; and after treating the ministers of his mosque, was willing to indulge them with the sight of this illumination.

Jaaffier, said the caliph, with a tone that plainly shewed his anger was a little mollified, according to your own account, you have committed three faults; the first, in giving Scheich Ibrahim leave to perform this ceremony in my pavilion, for a person in such an office is not worthy of so great an honour; the second, in not acquainting me with it; and the third, in not diving into the bottom of the good old man's intention. For my part, I am persuaded he only did it to try if he could get any money towards bearing the charge of it; but that never came into your head.

The grand vizier, overjoyed to hear the caliph put the matter upon that footing, very willingly owned the faults he reproached him with, and freely confessed he was to blame in not giving Scheich Ibrahim a few pieces of gold. Since the case is so, added the caliph, it is just that thou shouldst be punished for thy mistakes, but thy punishment shall be light: thou shalt spend the remainder of the night as I mean to do, with these honest people, whose

company I shall be well pleased with; and while I am putting on a citizen's habit, go thou and disguise thyself with Mesrour, and come both of you along with me. The vizier would have persuaded him it was late, and that all the company would be gone before he could get thither: but the caliph said he would positively go. The vizier, who knew that not a syllable of what he had said was true, began to be in great consternation; but there was no reply to be made, and go he must.

The caliph then, disguised like a citizen, with the grand vizier Jaaffier and Mesrour, chief of the eunuchs, stole out of the palace together. They rambled through the streets of Bagdad till they came to the garden; the door, through the carelessness of Scheich Ibrahim, was open, he having forgotten to shut it when he came back with the wine. The caliph was very angry at this. Jaaffier, said he to the grand vizier, what excuse have you for the door's being open at this unseasonable hour? Is it possible that Scheich Ibrahim makes a custom of leaving it thus all night? I rather believe the hurry of the feast has been the occasion of this neglect.

The caliph went into the garden; and when he came to the pavilion, resolving not to go into the hall till he knew what was doing, consulted with the grand vizier whether it was not his best way to climb up into one of the trees that was near, to observe

what was going forward. The grand vizier casting his eyes upon the door, perceived it stood half open, and told the caliph. It seems Scheich Ibrahim had left it so, when he was prevailed upon to come in and bear Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian company.

The caliph laying aside his first design, stole softly up to the hall-door, which standing half open, he could see all the company within, without being discovered himself.

But how was he surprised, when he saw a lady of incomparable beauty and a handsome young man sitting, with Scheich Ibrahim by them. Scheich Ibrahim held a cup in his hand. My fair lady, said he to the fair Persian, a true toper never drinks without singing a song first: if you please to hear, I will give you one of my best songs.

Scheich Ibrahim sung, and the caliph was the more surprised, because till that moment he never knew of his drinking wine, but always took him for a grave, solid man, as he seemed to be to outward appearance. The caliph retired from the door with the same caution as he had made his approaches to it; and coming to the grand vizier, who was standing on the steps a little lower, Come up, said he to him, and see if those within are the ministers of the mosque, as you would have made me believe.

By the tone of voice in which the caliph spoke

these last words, the vizier understood that things went ill on his side: however, he went up the steps; but when he had peeped in at the door, and saw the three sitting in that condition, he trembled for his life. He returned to the caliph, but in such confusion, that he knew not what to say. What riotous doings are here? said the caliph to him: who are these people that have presumed to take the liberty of diverting themselves in my garden and pavilion? and how durst Scheich Ibrahim give them admittance, and partake of the diversion with them? I must, however, confess, I never saw two persons more beautiful or better paired in my life; and therefore, before I discover my anger, I will inform myself better, and know who they are, and the reason of their being here. He went to the door again to observe them more narrowly; and the vizier, who followed, stood behind him, while he fixed his eyes upon them. They both plainly heard every word that Scheich Ibrahim said to the fair Persian. Is there any thing, my charming lady, wanting to render the pleasure of the evening more complete? Nothing but a lute, replied the fair Persian, and methinks, if you could get me one, all would be well. Can you play upon it? said Scheich Ibrahim. Fetch me one, replied the fair Persian, and you shall hear whether I can or not.

Scheich Ibrahim, without stirring very far from

his place, took a lute out of a press, and presented it to the fair Persian, who began to tune it. The caliph, in the mean time, turning to the grand vizier, Jaaffier, said he, the young lady is going to play upon the lute; and if she performs well, I will forgive her, and the young man for her sake; but as for thee, I will have thee impaled. Commander of the true believers, replied the grand vizier, if that is your intention, I wish to God she may play ill. Why so? said the caliph. Because, replied the grand vizier, the longer we live in this world, the more reason we shall have to comfort ourselves with the hopes of dying in good sociable company. The caliph, who loved a repartee, began to laugh at this; and putting his ear to the opening of the door, listened to hear the fair Persian play.

The fair Persian began in such a style, that, from the first moment of her touching the lute, the caliph perceived she did it with a masterly hand. Afterwards accompanying the lute with her voice, which was admirably fine, she sung and played with so much skill and sweetness, that the caliph was quite ravished to hear her.

As soon as the fair Persian had finished her song, the caliph went down the steps, and the vizier followed him. When he came to the bottom, I never, said he to the vizier, heard a more charming voice, or a lute better touched. Isaac[16], whom I thought

the most skilful player in the world, does not come up to her. I am so charmed with her music, that I will go in, and hear her play before me. We must, therefore, consider how I can do it.

Commander of the true believers, said the grand vizier, if you should go in, and Scheich Ibrahim chance to know you, he would infallibly die with the fright. It is that which hurts me, replied the caliph, and I should be loth to be the occasion of his death, after so many years service. A thought is just come into my head, that may succeed; stay here with Mesrour, and wait for me in the next walk.

The neighbourhood of the Tigris had given the caliph an opportunity of turning the stream under a stately bridge into his garden, through a piece of water, whither the choicest fish of the river used to retire. The fishermen knew it well; but the caliph had expressly charged Scheich Ibrahim not to suffer any of them to come near it. However, that night, a fisherman passing by the garden-door, which the caliph had left open as he found it, made use of the opportunity, and going in, went directly to the canal.

The fisherman immediately fell to work with his nets, and was just ready to draw them, when the caliph, fearing what would be the effect of Scheich Ibrahim's negligence, but willing to make

use of it to bring his design about, came to the same place. The fisherman, in spite of his disguise, knew him, and throwing himself at his feet, humbly implored his pardon, and excused himself on account of his poverty. Rise, said the caliph, and be not afraid; only draw your nets, that I may see what fish you have got.

The fisherman, recovered of his fright, quickly obeyed the caliph's orders. He drew out five or six very large fishes; and the caliph choosing the two biggest, tied them together by the head, with the twig of a tree. After this, said he to the fisherman, Give me thy clothes, and take mine. The exchange was soon made; and the caliph being dressed like a fisherman, even to his boots and turban, Take thy nets, said he to the fisherman, and get thee about thy business.

When the fisherman, well pleased with his good fortune, was gone, the caliph, taking the two fishes in his hand, went to look after the grand vizier and Mesrour; he first met Jaaffier, who, not knowing him, asked what he wanted, and bade him go about his business. The caliph fell a laughing; by which the vizier recognising him, Commander of the true believers, said he, is it possible it can be you? I knew you not; and I ask a thousand pardons for my rudeness. You are so disguised, that you may venture into the hall without any fear of being dis-

covered by Scheich Ibrahim. Stay you here with Mesrour, said the caliph, while I go and play my part.

The caliph went up to the hall, and knocked at the door. Noor ad Deen hearing him first, told Scheich Ibrahim of it, who asked who was there? The caliph opened the door, and stepping a little way into the hall to shew himself, Scheich Ibrahim, said he, I am the fisherman Kerim, who being informed of your design to treat some of your friends, have brought you two very fine fishes, fresh caught, to ask if you have any occasion for them.

Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian were pleased to hear him name fish. Pray, said the latter to Scheich Ibrahim, let him come in, that we may look at them. Scheich Ibrahim, by this time, was incapable of asking this counterfeit fisherman how or which way he came thither, his whole thought being only to oblige the fair Persian. With much ado he turned his head towards the door, being quite drunk, and, in a stammering tone, calling to the caliph, whom he took to be a fisherman, Come hither, thou nightly thief, said he, and let us see what thou hast got.

The caliph went forwards, and counterfeiting all the actions of a fisherman, presented the two fishes. These are very fine ones indeed, said the fair Persian, and if they were well dressed and seasoned, I should be glad to eat some of them. The lady is in the

right, answered Scheich Ibrahim; but what can you do with your fish, unless it were dressed? Go, dress it thyself, and bring it to us; thou wilt find every thing necessary in my kitchen.

The caliph went back to the grand vizier. Jaaffier, said he, I have been very well received; but they want the fish to be dressed. I will take care to dress it myself, said the grand vizier, and they shall have it in a moment. Nay, replied the caliph, so eager am I to accomplish my design, that I will take that trouble myself; for since I have personated the fisherman so well, surely I can play the cook for once; in my younger days, I dealt a little in cookery, and always came off with credit. So saying, he went directly towards Scheich Ibrahim's lodgings, and the grand vizier and Mesrour followed him.

They all fell to work; and though Scheich Ibrahim's kitchen was not very large, yet there was every thing in it that they wanted. The fish was quickly cooked; and the caliph served it up, putting to every one's plate a lemon to squeeze into the sauce, if they thought proper. They all ate very heartily, but especially Noor ad Deen and the fair Persian; and the caliph stood before them.

As soon as the repast was over, Noor ad Deen looking at the caliph, Fisherman, said he, there never was better fish eaten; and you have done us the greatest favour. At the same time, putting his

hand into his bosom, and pulling out a purse of thirty pieces of gold, the remainder of forty that Sangiar, the officer of the king of Bussorah, had given him just upon his departure, Take it, said he to him; if I had any more, thou shouldst have it; had I known thee in my prosperity, I would have taken care to secure thee from want: do not refuse the small present I make thee, but accept of it as kindly as if it were much greater.

The caliph took the purse, thanked Noor ad Deen, and perceiving by the weight that it contained gold, Sir, said he to him, I cannot enough thank you for your liberality, and I think myself very fortunate in having to do with a person of your generosity; but before I take my leave I have a favour to ask, which I beg you not to deny me. Yonder is a lute, which makes me believe that the lady understands playing upon it; and if you can prevail with her to play but one tune, I shall go away perfectly satisfied; for a lute, sir, is an instrument I am particularly fond of.

Fair Persian, said Noor ad Deen, immediately addressing himself to her, I ask that favour of you, and I hope you will not refuse me. She took up the lute without more intreaties, and putting it presently in tune, played and sung with such an air, as charmed the very soul of the caliph. Afterwards she played upon the lute without singing, but with so

much strength and softness, as to transport him into an ecstasy.

When the fair Persian had given over playing, the caliph cried out, What a voice! what a hand! what skill! Was there ever finer singing, or better playing upon the lute? Never was there any seen or heard like it.

Noor ad Deen, who was accustomed to give all that belonged to him to persons who praised him, said, Fisherman, I find thou hast some taste for music: since thou art so delighted with her performance, she is thine, I make thee a present of her. At the same time he rose up, and taking his robe which he had laid by, was going away, and leaving the caliph, whom he believed to be no other than a fisherman, in possession of the fair Persian.

The fair Persian was extremely surprised at Noor ad Deen's liberality; she took hold of him, and looking tenderly at him, Whither, sir, said she, are you going? sit down in your place, I intreat you, and hearken to what I am going to sing and play. He did as she desired him, and then the fair Persian, touching the lute, and looking upon him with tears in her eyes, sung some verses that she had made *ex tempore*, to reproach him with his indifference, and the easiness as well as cruelty with which he resigned her to Kerim. She only hinted, without explaining herself any farther to a fisherman;

for she, as well as Noor ad Deen, was ignorant of his being the caliph. When she had done playing, she put the lute down by her, and clapped a handkerchief to her face, to hide the tears she could not repress.

Noor ad Deen made no answer to all these reproaches, but by his silence seemed to declare he did not repent of what he had done. The caliph, surprised at what he had heard, said, Sir, as far as I see, this beautiful, rare, and accomplished lady, of whom so generously you have made me a present, is your slave? It is very true, Kerim, replied Noor ad Deen, and thou wouldst be more surprised than thou art now, should I tell thee all the misfortunes that have happened to me upon her account. Ah! I beseech you, sir, replied the caliph, still behaving like a fisherman, oblige me so far as to let me hear part of your story.

Noor ad Deen, who had already obliged him in several things of more consequence, was so complaisant as to relate the whole story to him. He began with the vizier his father's buying the fair Persian for the king of Bussorah, and omitted nothing of what he had done, or what had happened to him, from that time to their arrival at Bagdad, and to the very moment he was talking to him.

When Noor ad Deen had ended his story, And whither are you going now? asked the caliph.

Where Heaven shall direct me, answered Noor ad Deen. If you will believe me, replied the caliph, you shall go no farther, but, on the contrary, you must return to Bussorah: I will write a short letter, which you shall give the king in my name: you shall see upon the reading it, he will give you a very handsome reception, and nobody will dare to speak against you.

Kerim, said Noor ad Deen, what thou hast told me is very singular; I never heard that a poor fisherman, as thou art, had any correspondence with a king? Be not astonished at that, replied the caliph: you must know, that we both studied together under the same masters, and were always the best friends in the world: it is true, fortune has not been equally favourable to us; she has made him a king, and me a fisherman[17]. But this inequality has not lessened our friendship. He has often expressed a readiness and desire to advance my fortune, but I always refused; and am better pleased with the satisfaction of knowing that he will never deny me whatever I ask for the service and advantage of my friends: let me do it, and you shall see the success.

Noor ad Deen consented to what the caliph had proposed; and there being every thing necessary for writing in the hall, the caliph wrote a letter to the king of Bussorah; at the top of which he placed this form, In the name of the most merciful God, to shew he would be absolutely obeyed.

"Haroon al Rusheed, son of Mhadi, sends this letter to Zinebi, his cousin. As soon as Noor ad Deen, son to the late vizier Khacan, the bearer, has delivered you this letter, and you have read it, pull off the royal vestments, put them on his shoulders, and place him in thy seat without fail. Farewell."

The caliph folded up the letter, sealed it, and giving it to Noor ad Deen, without saying any thing of what was in it, Go, said he, embark immediately in a vessel that is ready to go off (as there did constantly every day at the same hour); you may sleep when you are aboard.

Noor ad Deen took the letter, and departed with the little money he had about him when Sangiar gave him his purse; and the fair Persian, distracted with grief at his departure, retired to one of the sofas, and wept bitterly.

Noor ad Deen was scarcely gone out of the hall, when Scheich Ibrahim, who had been silent during the whole transaction, looking stedfastly upon the caliph, whom he still took for the fisherman Kerim, Hark'e, said he, Kerim, thou hast brought us two fishes, that are worth twenty pieces of copper at most, and thou hast got a purse and a slave: but dost thou think to have all for thyself? I here declare, that I will go halves with thee in the slave; and as for the purse, shew me what is in the inside:

if it is silver, thou shalt have one piece for thyself; but if it is gold, I will have it all, and give thee in exchange some pieces of copper which I have in my purse.

For the better understanding of what follows, said Scheherazade, interrupting herself here, we must observe, that the caliph, before his serving up the fish, had dispatched the grand vizier to his palace, with orders to get four slaves with a rich habit, and to wait on the other side of the pavilion till he gave a signal with his finger against the window. The grand vizier performed his commission; and he, Mesrour, and the four slaves, waited at the appointed place, expecting the sign.

But to return to my story, said the sultaness: The caliph, still personating the fisherman, answered Scheich Ibrahim boldly, I know not what there is in the purse; gold or silver, you shall freely go my halves: but as to the slave, I will have her all to myself; and if you will not accept these conditions, you shall have nothing.

Scheich Ibrahim, enraged to the last degree at this insolence, considering him only as a fisherman, snatched up one of the china dishes which were on the table, and flung it at the caliph's head. The caliph easily avoided the blow, being thrown by a person in liquor; but the dish striking against the wall, was dashed into a thousand pieces. Scheich

Ibrahim grew more enraged at having missed his aim, and catching up the candle that stood upon the table, rose from his seat, and went staggering down a pair of back-stairs to look for a cane.

The caliph took this opportunity, and striking his hands against the window, the grand vizier, Mesrour, and the four slaves were with him in an instant: the slaves quickly pulled off the fisherman's clothes, and put him on the habit they had brought. They had not quite dressed the caliph, who had seated himself on the throne that was in the hall, but were busy about him when Scheich Ibrahim, spurred on by interest, came back with a cane in his hand, with which he designed to pay the pretended fisherman soundly; but instead of finding him, he saw his clothes in the middle of the hall, and the caliph on his throne, with the grand vizier and Mesrour on each side of him. He stood awhile gazing on this unexpected sight, doubting whether he was awake or asleep. The caliph fell a laughing at his astonishment; and calling to him, Scheich Ibrahim, said he, what dost thou want? whom dost thou look after?

Scheich Ibrahim, no longer doubting that it was the caliph, immediately threw himself at his feet, with his face and long beard to the ground. Commander of the true believers, cried he, your vile

slave has offended you; but he implores your clemency, and asks a thousand pardons for his offence. As soon as the slaves had finished dressing him, he came down from his throne, and advancing towards him, Rise, said he, I forgive thee.

The caliph then addressed himself to the fair Persian, who had suspended her sorrow as soon as she understood that the garden and pavilion belonged to that prince, and not to Scheich Ibrahim, as he had all along made her believe, and that it was he himself disguised in the fisherman's clothes. Fair Persian, said he, rise, and follow me: by what you have lately seen, you ought to know who I am, and to believe that I am above taking any advantage of the present which Noor ad Deen, with a generosity not to be paralleled, has made me of your person. I have sent him to Bussorah as king; and when I have given him the dispatches necessary for his establishment, you shall go thither and be queen. In the mean time I am going to order an apartment for you in my palace, where you shall be treated according to your desert.

This discourse encouraged the fair Persian, and comforted her very sensibly. The joy for the advancement of Noor ad Deen, whom she passionately loved, to so high an honour, made her sufficient amends for her affliction. The caliph kept his pro-

mise, and recommended her to the care of his empress Zobeide, whom he acquainted with the esteem he had entertained for Noor ad Deen.

Noor ad Deen's return to Bussorah was more fortunate, and speedier by some days than he could have expected. Upon his arrival, without visiting any of his friends or relations he went directly to the palace, where the king at that time was giving public audience. With the letter held up in his hand, he pressed through the crowd, who presently made way for him to come forward and deliver it. The king took and opened it, and his colour changed in reading it; he kissed it thrice, and was just about to obey the caliph's orders, when he bethought himself of shewing it to the vizier Saouy, Noor ad Deen's irreconcileable enemy.

Saouy, who had discovered Noor ad Deen, and began to conjecture, with great uneasiness, what might be the design of his coming, was no less surprised than the king at the order contained in the letter; and being as much concerned in it, he instantly devised a method to evade it. He pretended not to have read the letter quite through, and therefore desiring a second view of it, turned himself a little on one side as if he wanted a better light, and, without being perceived by any body, dexterously tore off from the top of it the form which shewed the caliph

would be absolutely obeyed, and putting it into his mouth, swallowed it.

After this egregious piece of villany, Saouy turned to the king, and giving him the letter, Sir, said he to him in a low voice, what does your majesty intend to do? What the caliph has commanded me, replied the king. Have a care, sir, said the wicked vizier, what you do. It is true this is the caliph's hand, but the form is not to it. The king had observed it, but in his confusion thought his eyes had deceived him when he saw it was gone.

Sir, continued the vizier, we have no reason to doubt but that the caliph, on the complaints he has made against your majesty and myself, has granted him this letter to get rid of him, and not with any intention of having the order contained in it executed. Besides, we must consider he has sent no express with a patent; and without that the order is of no force. And since a king like your majesty was never deposed without that formality, any other man as well as Noor ad Deen might come with a forged letter: let who will bring such a letter as this, it ought not to be put in execution. Your majesty may depend upon it, that is never done; and I will take upon myself all the consequence of disobeying this order.

King Zinebi, easily persuaded by this pernicious

counsel, left Noor ad Deen entirely to the discretion of the vizier Saouy, who led him to his house in a very insulting manner; and after causing him to be bastinadoed till he was almost dead, he ordered him to a prison, where he commanded him to be put into the darkest and deepest dungeon, with a strict charge to the gaoler to give him nothing but bread and water.

When Noor ad Deen, half dead with the strokes, came to himself, and found what a dismal dungeon he was in, he bewailed his misfortunes in the most pathetic manner. Ah! fisherman, cried he, how hast thou cheated me; and how easy have I been in believing thee! Could I, after the civility I shewed thee, expect such inhuman and barbarous usage? However, may Heaven reward thee; for I cannot persuade myself that thy intention was so base; and I will with patience wait the end of my afflictions.

The disconsolate Noor ad Deen remained six whole days in this miserable condition; and Saouy did not forget that he had confined him there; but being resolved to put him to a shameful death, and not daring to do it by his own authority, to accomplish his villanous design, loaded some of his slaves with rich presents, which he, at the head of them, went and presented to the king. Behold, sire, said he, with the blackest malice, what the new king has

sent you upon his accession to the crown, and begs your majesty to accept.

The king taking the matter just as Saouy intended, What! replied he, is that wretch still living? I thought you had put him to death already. Sire, I have no power, answered the vizier, to take any person's life; that only belongs to your majesty. Go, said the king, behead him instantly; I give you full authority. Sire, replied the vizier Saouy, I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for the justice you do me; but since Noor ad Deen has publicly affronted me, I humbly beg the favour, that his execution may be performed before the palace; and that the criers may publish it in every quarter of the city, so that every body may be satisfied he has made a sufficient reparation for the affront. The king granted his request; and the criers in performing their office diffused universal sorrow through the whole city. The memory of his father's virtues being yet fresh among them, no one could hear, without horror and indignation, that the son was going to suffer an ignominious death.

Saouy went in person to the prison, accompanied by twenty slaves, ministers of his cruelty, who took Noor ad Deen out of the dungeon, and put him upon a shabby horse without a saddle. When Noor ad Deen saw himself in the hands of his enemy, Thou triumphest now, said he, and abusest thy power;

but I trust in the truth of what is written in our scripture, "You judge unjustly, and in a little time you shall be judged yourself." The vizier Saouy triumphed in his heart. What! insolent, said he, darest thou insult me yet? but I care not what may happen to me, so I have the pleasure of seeing thee lose thy head in the public view of all Bussorah. Thou oughtest also to remember what another of our books says, "What signifies if one dies the next day after the death of his enemy?"

The vizier, implacable in his hatred and enmity, surrounded by his slaves in arms, conducted Noor ad Deen towards the palace. The people were ready to fall upon him as he passed; and if any one had set the example, would certainly have stoned him to death. When he had brought him to the place of suffering, which was to be in sight of the king's apartment, he left him in the executioner's hands, and went straight to the king, who was in his closet, ready to glut his eyes with the bloody spectacle he had prepared.

The king's guard and the vizier's slaves, who made a circle round Noor ad Deen, had much trouble to withstand the people, who made all possible efforts to break through, and carry him off by force. The executioner coming up to him, said, I hope you will forgive me; I am but a slave, and cannot help doing my duty. If you have no occasion for any

thing more, I beseech you to prepare yourself; for the king is just going to give me orders to strike the blow.

The unfortunate Noor ad Deen, at that moment, looking round upon the people, Will no charitable body, cried he, bring me a little water to quench my thirst? Which immediately they did, and handed it up to him upon the scaffold. The vizier Saouy perceiving this delay, called out to the executioner from the king's closet-window, where he had planted himself, Strike, what dost thou stay for? At these inhuman words the whole place echoed with loud imprecations against him; and the king, jealous of his authority, made it appear, by enjoining him to stop awhile, that he was angry at his presumption. But there was another reason; for the king that very moment casting his eye towards a street that faced him, saw a troop of horsemen advancing full speed towards the palace. Vizier, said the king immediately, look yonder; what is the meaning of those horsemen? Saouy, who knew not who they might be, earnestly pressed the king to give the executioner the sign. No, replied the king; I will first know who those horsemen are. It was the vizier Jaaffier, with his train, who came in person from Bagdad by the caliph's order.

To understand the occasion of this minister's coming to Bussorah, we must observe, that after

Noor ad Deen's departure with the letter, the caliph the next day, nor for several days after, thought not of sending him the patent which he mentioned to the fair Persian. He happened one day to be in the inner palace, which was that of the women, and passing by her apartment, heard the sound of a fine voice: he listened to it; and he had no sooner heard the words of one complaining for the absence of somebody, than he asked the officer of the eunuchs who attended him, who the woman was that lived in that apartment? The officer told him it was the young stranger's slave whom he had sent to Bussorah to be king in the room of Mahummud Zinebi.

Ah! poor Noor ad Deen, cried the caliph, I had forgotten thee; but hasten, said he to the officer, and bid Jaaffier come to me. The vizier was with him in an instant. As soon as he came, Jaaffier, said he, I have hitherto neglected sending the patent which was to confirm Noor ad Deen king of Bussorah; but we have no time now to draw up one; therefore immediately take post-horses, and with some of your servants, make what haste you can to that city. If Noor ad Deen is no longer alive, but put to death by them, order the vizier Saouy to be impaled; but if he is living, bring him to me with the king and the vizier.

The grand vizier stayed no longer than just to get on horseback; and being attended by a great

train of officers belonging to his household departed for Bussorah, where he arrived in the manner and at the time already mentioned. As soon as he came to the palace-yard, the people cleared the way for him, crying out, A pardon for Noor ad Deen! and with his whole train he rode into the palace, even to the very stairs, where he alighted.

The king of Bussorah, knowing him to be the caliph's chief minister, went to meet him, and received him at the entrance of his apartment. The first question the vizier asked was, If Noor ad Deen was living? and if he was, he desired that he might be sent for. The king made answer, he was alive, and gave orders to have him brought in. Accordingly he soon made his appearance as he was, bound with cords. The grand vizier Jaaffier caused him to be unbound, and setting him at liberty, ordered the vizier Saouy to be seized, and bound him with the same cords.

The grand vizier remained but one night at Bussorah; and, according to the order he had received, carried Saouy, the king of Bussorah, and Noor ad Deen, along with him. Upon his arrival at Bagdad, he presented them to the caliph: and after he had given him an account of his journey, and particularly the miserable condition in which he found Noor ad Deen, and his ill usage by the advice and malice of Saouy, the caliph desired Noor ad

Deen to behead the vizier himself. Commander of the true believers, said the generous youth, notwithstanding the injury this wicked man has done me, and the mischief he endeavoured to do my deceased father, I should think myself the basest of mankind if I stained my hands with his blood. The caliph was pleased with his generosity, and ordered justice to be done by the executioner.

The caliph would fain have sent Noor ad Deen to Bussorah as king; but he humbly begged to be excused from accepting the offer. Commander of the true believers, said Noor ad Deen, the city of Bussorah, after the misfortunes that have happened to me there, will be so much my aversion, that I beseech your majesty to give me leave to keep the oath which I have made, of never returning thither again; and I shall think it my greatest glory to serve near your royal person, if you are pleased to allow me the honour. The caliph consented; and placing him among the number of those courtiers who were his greatest favourites, restored the fair Persian to him again. To all these favours he added a plentiful fortune; and he and the fair Persian lived together thenceforth, with all the happiness this world could afford.

As for the king of Bussorah, the caliph contented himself with hinting how careful he ought to be in the choice of his viziers, and sent him back to his kingdom.

THE STORY OF BEDER[18], PRINCE OF PERSIA, AND JEHAUN-ARA[19], PRINCESS OF SAMANDAL, OR SUMMUNDER.

PERSIA was an empire of such vast extent, that its ancient monarchs, not without reason, assumed the haughty title of King of kings. For not to mention those subdued by their arms, there were kingdoms and provinces whose kings were not only tributary, but also in as great subjection as governors in other nations are to the monarchs.

One of these kings, who in the beginning of his reign had signalized himself by many glorious and successful conquests, enjoyed so profound a peace and tranquillity, as rendered him the happiest of princes. The only point in which he thought himself unfortunate was, that amongst all his wives, not one had brought him a son; and being now far advanced in years, he was desirous of an heir. He had above a hundred ladies, all lodged in separate apartments, with women-slaves to wait upon and eunuchs to guard them; yet, notwithstanding all his endeavours to please their taste, and anticipate their wishes, there was not one that answered his expectation. He had women frequently brought him from the most remote countries; and if they pleased him, he not only gave the merchants

their full price, but loaded them with honours and benedictions, in hopes that at last he might be so happy as to meet with one by whom he might have a son. There was scarcely an act of charity but he performed, to prevail with heaven. He gave immense sums to the poor, besides large donatives to the religious; building for their use many noble colleges richly endowed, in hopes of obtaining by their prayers what he so earnestly desired.

One day, according to the custom of his royal predecessors, during their residence in their capital, he held an assembly of his courtiers, at which all the ambassadors and strangers of quality about the court were present; and where they not only entertained one another with news and politics, but also by conversing on the sciences, history, poetry, literature, and whatever else was capable of diverting the mind. On that day an eunuch came to acquaint him with the arrival of a certain merchant from a distant country, who, having brought a slave with him, desired leave to shew her to his majesty. Give him admittance instantly, said the king, and after the assembly is over I will talk with him. The merchant was introduced, and seated in a convenient place, from whence he might easily have a full view of the king, and hear him talk familiarly to those that stood near his person. The king observed this rule to all strangers, in order that by degrees they

might grow acquainted with him; so that, when they saw with what freedom and civility he addressed himself to all, they might be encouraged to talk to him in the same manner, without being abashed at the pomp and splendour of his appearance, which was enough to deprive those of their power of speech who were not used to it. He treated the ambassadors also after the same manner. He ate with them, and during the repast asked them several questions concerning their health, their journey, and the peculiarities of their country. After they had been thus encouraged, he gave them audience.

When the assembly was over, and all the company had retired, the merchant, who was the only person left, fell prostrate before the king's throne, with his face to the earth, wishing his majesty an accomplishment of all his desires. As soon as he arose, the king asked him if the report of his having brought a slave for him was true, and whether she were handsome?

Sire, replied the merchant, I doubt not but your majesty has many very beautiful women, since you search every corner of the earth for them; but I may boldly affirm, without overvaluing my merchandize, that you never yet saw a woman that could stand in competition with her for shape and beauty, agreeable qualifications, and all the perfections that she is mistress of. Where is she? demanded the king;

bring her to me instantly. Sire, replied the merchant, I have delivered her into the hands of one of your chief eunuchs; and your majesty may send for her at your pleasure.

The fair slave was immediately brought in; and no sooner had the king cast his eyes on her, but he was charmed with her beautiful and easy shape. He went directly into a closet, and was followed by the merchant and a few eunuchs. The fair slave wore, over her face, a red satin veil striped with gold; and when the merchant had taken it off, the king of Persia beheld a female that surpassed in beauty, not only his present ladies, but all that he had ever had before. He immediately fell passionately in love with her, and desired the merchant to name his price.

Sire, said he, I gave a thousand pieces of gold to the person of whom I bought her; and in my three years journey to your court, I reckon I have spent as much more: but I shall forbear setting any price to so great a monarch; and therefore, if your majesty likes her, I humbly beg you would accept of her as a present. I am highly obliged to you, replied the king; but it is never my custom to treat merchants, who come hither for my pleasure, in so ungenerous a manner; I am going to order thee ten thousand pieces of gold; will that be sufficient? Sire, answered the merchant, I should have esteemed my-

self happy in your majesty's acceptence of her; yet I dare not refuse so generous an offer. I will not fail to publish your liberality in my own country, and in every place through which I may pass. The money was paid; and before he departed, the king made him put on a rich suit of cloth of gold.

The king caused the fair slave to be lodged in the apartment next his own, and gave particular orders to the matrons, and the female slaves appointed to attend her, that after bathing they should dress her in the richest habit they could find, and carry her the finest pearl necklaces, the brightest diamonds, and other richest precious stones, that she might choose those she liked best.

The officious matrons, whose only care was to please the king, were astonished at her beauty; and being good judges, they told his majesty, that if he would allow them but three days, they would engage to make her so much handsomer than she was at present, that he would scarcely know her again. The king could hardly prevail with himself to delay so long the pleasure of enjoying her, but at last he consented.

The king of Persia's capital was situated in an island; and his palace, which was very magnificent, was built on the shore: his apartment looked on the water; the fair slave's, which was near it, had also the same prospect, and was the more agreeable, on

account of the sea's beating almost against the walls.

At the three days end, the fair slave, magnificently dressed, was alone in her chamber, sitting on a sofa, and leaning against one of the windows that faced the sea, when the king, being informed that he might visit her, came in. The slave hearing somebody walk in the room, with an air quite different from that of the female-slaves, who had hitherto attended her, immediately turned her head about to see who it was. She knew him to be the king, but without discovering the least surprise, or so much as rising from her seat to salute or receive him, as if he had been the most indifferent person in the world, she put herself in the same posture again.

The king of Persia was extremely surprised to see a slave of so beauteous a form so ignorant of the world. He attributed this to the narrowness of her education, and the little care that had been taken to instruct her in the first rules of civility. He went to her at the window, where, notwithstanding the coldness and indifference with which she had received him, she suffered herself to be admired, caressed, and embraced, as much as he pleased.

In the midst of these amorous embraces and tender endearments, the king paused awhile, to gaze upon, or rather to devour her with his eyes. My lovely fair one! my charmer! exclaimed he; whence

came you, and where do those happy parents live who brought into the world so surprising a masterpiece of nature? How do I love thee, and shall always continue to do. Never did I feel for a woman what I now feel for you; and though I have seen, and every day behold a vast number of beauties, yet never did my eyes contemplate so many charms in one person—charms which have so transported me, that I shall entirely devote myself to you. My dearest life, continued he, you neither answer, nor by any visible token give me the least reason to believe that you are sensible of the demonstrations I have given you of the ardour of my passion; neither will you turn your eyes on me, to afford mine the pleasure of meeting them, and to convince you that it is impossible to love in a higher degree than I do you. Why will you still preserve this obstinate silence, which chills me? and whence proceeds the seriousness, or rather sorrow, that torments me to the soul? do you mourn for your country, your friends or your relations? Alas! is not the king of Persia, who loves and adores you, capable of comforting you, and making you amends for every loss?

Notwithstanding all the protestations of love the king of Persia made the fair slave, and all he could say to induce her to speak to him, she remained unaltered; and keeping her eyes still fixed

upon the ground, would neither look at him, nor utter a word.

The king of Persia, delighted with the purchase he had made of a slave that pleased him so well, pressed her no farther, in hopes that by treating her kindly he might prevail upon her to change her behaviour. He clapped his hands; and the women who waited in an outward room entered: he commanded them to bring in supper. When it was arranged, My love, said he to the slave, come hither and sup with me. She rose from her seat; and being seated opposite the king, his majesty helped her, before he began eating himself; and did so of every dish during supper. The slave ate as well as the king, but still with downcast eyes, and without speaking a word; though he often asked her how she liked the entertainment, and whether it was dressed according to her taste.

The king, willing to change the conversation, asked her what her name was, how she liked the clothes and the jewels she had on, what she thought of her apartment and the rich furniture, and whether the prospect of the sea was not very agreeable? But to all these questions she made no reply; so that the king was at a loss what to think of her silence. He imagined at first, that she might perhaps be dumb: but then, said he to himself, can it be possible that heaven should form a creature so beautiful,

so perfect, and so accomplished, and at the same time with so great an imperfection? Were it however so, I could not love her with less passion than I do.

When the king of Persia rose, he washed his hands on one side, while the fair slave washed hers on the other. He took that opportunity to ask the woman who held the bason and napkin, if ever they had heard her speak. One of them replied, Sire, we have neither seen her open her lips, nor heard her speak any more than your majesty has; we have rendered her our services in the bath; we have dressed her head, put on her clothes, and waited upon her in her chamber; but she has never opened her lips, so much as to say, that is well, or I like this. We have often asked her, Madam, do you want any thing? Is there any thing you wish for? Do but ask, and command us: but we have never been able to draw a word from her. We cannot tell whether her silence proceeds from pride, sorrow, stupidity, or dumbness.

The king was more astonished at hearing this than he had been before: however, believing the slave might have some cause of sorrow, he was willing to endeavour to divert and amuse her. Accordingly he appointed a very splendid assembly, which all the ladies of the court attended; and those who were skilful in playing upon musical instruments

performed their parts, while others sung or danced, or did both together: they played at all sorts of games, which much diverted the king. The fair slave was the only person who took no pleasure in these attempts to amuse her; she never moved from her place, but remained with her eyes fixed on the ground with so much indifference, that all the ladies were not less surprised than the king. After the assembly was over, every one retired to her apartment; and the king, who was left alone with the fair slave, lay with her that night.

The next morning the king of Persia rose more pleased than he had been with all the women he had seen before, and more enamoured with the fair slave than ever. Indeed, he soon made it appear, by resolving henceforth to attach himself to her alone; and performed his resolution. On the same day he dismissed all his other women, giving every one of them their jewels, and other valuables, besides a considerable fortune, with free leave to marry whom they thought fit; and only kept the matrons and a few other elderly women to wait upon the fair slave. However, for a whole year together, she never afforded him the pleasure of one single word; yet the king continued his assiduities to please her, and to give her the most signal proofs of sincere love.

After the expiration of the year, the king sitting

one day by his mistress, protested to her that his love, instead of being diminished, grew every day more violent. My queen, said he, I cannot divine what your thoughts are; but nothing is more true, and I swear to you, that having the happiness of possessing you, there remains nothing for me to desire. I esteem my kingdom, great as it is, less than an atom, when I have the pleasure of beholding you, and of telling you a thousand times that I adore you. I desire not that my words alone should oblige you to believe me. Surely you can no longer doubt of my devotion to you after the sacrifice which I have made to your beauty of so many women, whom I before kept in my palace. You may remember it is about a year since I sent them all away; and I as little repent of it now, as I did the moment of their departure; and I never shall repent. Nothing would be wanting to complete my happiness and crown my joy, would you but speak one single word to me, by which I might be assured that you thought yourself at all obliged. But how can you speak to me if you are dumb? and alas! I feel but too apprehensive that this is the case. How can I doubt, since you still torment me with silence, after having for a whole year in vain supplicated you to speak? If it is possible for me to obtain of you that consolation, may heaven at least grant me the blessing of a son by you, to succeed me. I every day find myself growing old, and I be-

gin already to want one to assist me in bearing the weight of my crown. Still I cannot conceal the desire I have of hearing you speak; for something within me tells me you are not dumb: and I beseech, I conjure you, dear madam, to break through this long silence, and speak but one word to me; after that I care not how soon I die.

At this discourse the fair slave, who, according to her usual custom, had hearkened to the king with downcast eyes, and had given him cause to believe not only that she was dumb, but that she had never laughed, began to smile. The king of Persia perceived it with a surprise that made him break forth into an exclamation of joy; and no longer doubting but that she was going to speak, he waited for that happy moment with an eagerness and attention that cannot easily be expressed.

At last the fair slave thus addressed herself to the king: Sire, I have so many things to say to your majesty, that, having once broken silence, I know not where to begin. However, in the first place, I think myself bound to thank you for all the favours and honours you been have pleased to confer upon me, and to implore heaven to bless and prosper you, to prevent the wicked designs of your enemies, and not suffer you to die after hearing me speak, but to grant you a long life. After this, sire, I cannot give you greater satisfaction than by acquainting you that

I am with child; and I wish, as you do, it may be a son. Had it never been my fortune to be pregnant, I was resolved (I beg your majesty to pardon the sincerity of my intention) never to have loved you, and to have kept an eternal silence; but now I love you as I ought to do.

The king of Persia, ravished to hear the fair slave not only speak, but tell him tidings in which he was so nearly concerned, embraced her tenderly. Shining light of my eyes, said he, it is impossible for me to receive greater delight than you have now given me: you have spoken to me, and you have declared your being with child, which I did not expect. After these two occasions of joy I am transported out of myself.

The king of Persia, in the transport of his feelings, said no more to the fair slave. He left her, but in such a manner as made her perceive his intention was speedily to return: and being willing that the occasion of his joys should be made public, he declared it to his officers, and sent for the grand vizier. As soon as he came, he ordered him to distribute a thousand pieces of gold among the holy men of his religion, who made vows of poverty; as also among the hospitals and the poor, by way of returning thanks to heaven: and his will was obeyed by the direction of that minister.

After the king of Persia had given this order, he

returned to the fair slave again. Madam, said he, pardon me for leaving you so abruptly, since you have been the occasion of it; but I hope you will indulge me with some conversation, since I am desirous to know of you several things of much greater consequence. Tell me, my dearest soul, what were the powerful reasons that induced you to persist in that obstinate silence for a whole year together, though every day you saw me, heard me talk to you, ate and drank with me, and every night lay with me? I shall pass by your not speaking; but how you could carry yourself so as that I could never discover whether you were sensible of what I said to you or no, I confess, surpasses my understanding; and I cannot yet comprehend how you could contain yourself so long; therefore I must conclude the occasion of it to be very extraordinary.

To satisfy the king of Persia's curiosity, replied the lady, think whether or no to be a slave, far from my own country, without any hopes of ever seeing it again, to have a heart torn with grief, at being separated for ever from my mother, my brother, my friends, and my acquaintance, are not these sufficient reasons for the silence your majesty has thought so strange and unaccountable? The love of our native country is as natural to us as that of our parents; and the loss of liberty is insupportable to every one who is not wholly destitute of common sense, and knows

how to set a value on it. The body indeed may be enslaved, and under the subjection of a master, who has the power and authority in his hands; the will can never be conquered, but remains free and unconfined, depending on itself alone, as your majesty has found in my case; and it is a wonder that I have not followed the example of many unfortunate wretches, whom the loss of liberty has reduced to the melancholy resolution of procuring their own deaths in a thousand ways, by a liberty which cannot be taken from them.

Madam, replied the king, I am convinced of the truth of what you say; but till this moment I was of opinion, that a person beautiful, of good understanding, like yourself, whom her evil destiny had condemned to be a slave, ought to think herself very happy in meeting with a king for her master.

Sire, replied the lady, whatever the slave be, as I have already observed to your majesty, there is no king on earth can tyrannize over her will. When indeed you speak of a slave mistress of charms sufficient to captivate a monarch, and induce him to love her; if she be of a rank infinitely below him, I am of your opinion, she ought to think herself happy in her misfortunes: still what happiness can it be, when she considers herself only as a slave, torn from a parent's arms, and perhaps from those of a lover, her passion for whom death only can extinguish?

but when this very slave is in nothing inferior to the king who has purchased her, your majesty shall judge yourself of the rigour of her destiny, her misery and her sorrow, and to what desperate attempts the anguish of despair may drive her.

The king of Persia, astonished at this discourse, Madam, said he, can it be possible that you are of royal blood, as by your words you seem to intimate? Explain the whole secret to me, I beseech you, and no longer augment my impatience. Let me instantly know who are the happy parents of so great a prodigy of beauty; who are your brothers, your sisters, and your relations; but, above all, tell me your name?

Sire, said the fair slave, my name is Gulnare[20] of the Sea; and my father, who is dead, was one of the most potent monarchs of the ocean. When he died, he left his kingdom to a brother of mine, named Saleh[21], and to the queen, my mother, who is also a princess, the daughter of another puissant monarch of the sea. We enjoyed profound peace and tranquillity through the whole kingdom, till a neighbouring prince, envious of our happiness, invaded our dominions with a mighty army; and penetrating as far as our capital, made himself master of it; and we had but just time to save ourselves in an impenetrable and inaccessible place, with a few trusty officers, who did not forsake us in our distress.

In this retreat my brother was not negligent in contriving means to drive the unjust invader from our dominions. One day taking me into his closet, Sister, said he, the events of the smallest undertakings are always dubious. For my own part, I may fail in the attempt I design to make to recover my kingdom; and I shall be less concerned for my own disgrace than what may possibly happen to you. To secure you from all accident, I would fain see you married. But in the present miserable condition of our affairs, I see no probability of matching you to any of the princes of the sea; and therefore I should be glad if you would concur in my opinion, and think of marrying some of the princes of the earth. I am ready to contribute all that lies in my power towards accomplishing this; and am certain there is not one of them, however powerful, but, considering your beauty, would be proud of sharing his crown with you.

At this discourse of my brother's, I fell into a violent passion. Brother, said I, you know that I am descended, as well as you, from the kings and queens of the sea, without any mixture of alliance with those of the earth; therefore I do not design to marry below myself, and I have taken an oath to that effect. The condition to which we are reduced shall never oblige me to alter my resolution;

and if you perish in the execution of your design, I am prepared to fall with you, rather than follow the advice I so little expected from you.

My brother, who was still earnest for my marriage, however improper for me, endeavoured to make me believe, that there were kings of the earth who were no ways inferior to those of the sea. This put me into a more violent passion, which occasioned him to say several bitter reflecting things, that nettled me to the quick. He left me, as much dissatisfied with myself as he could possibly be with me; and in this peevish mood I gave a spring from the bottom of the sea up to the island of the moon.

Notwithstanding the violent discontent that made me cast myself upon that island, I lived content in retirement. But in spite of all my precautions, a person of distinction, attended by his servants, surprised me sleeping, and carried me to his own house. He expressed much love to me, and omitted nothing which he thought might induce me to return his passion. When he saw that fair means would not prevail upon me, he attempted to use force: but I soon made him repent of his insolence. He resolved to sell me, which he did to the merchant who brought me hither, and sold me to your majesty. He was a prudent, courteous, humane man; and during the whole of the long journey, never gave me the least reason to complain.

As for your majesty, continued the princess Gulnare, if you had not shewn me all the respect you have hitherto done (for which I am extremely obliged to your goodness), and given me such undeniable marks of your affection, that I can no longer doubt of it; if you had not immediately sent away your women; I hesitate not to tell you, that I should not have remained with you. I would have thrown myself into the sea out of this window, where you accosted me when you first came into this apartment; and have gone in search of my mother, my brother, and the rest of my relations. I should have persisted in that design, and would have put it in execution, if after a certain time I had found myself deceived in the hopes of being with child; but, in the condition I am in, all I could say to my mother or my brother would never convince them that I have been slave to a king like your majesty. They would never believe it, but would for ever upbraid me with the crime I have voluntarily committed against my honour. However, sire, be it a prince or princess that I may bring into the world, it will be a pledge to engage me never to be parted from your majesty; and therefore I hope you will no longer regard me as a slave, but as a princess worthy your alliance.

In this manner the princess Gulnare discovered herself to the king of Persia, and finished her story.

My charming, my adorable princess, cried he, what wonders have I heard! and what ample matter for my curiosity, to ask a thousand questions concerning those strange and unheard-of things which you have related! But first, I ought to thank you for your goodness and patience in making trial of the truth and constancy of my passion. I thought it impossible for me to love you more than I did; but since I know you to be a princess, I love you a thousand times more. Princess! did I say, madam? you are no longer so; but you are my queen, the queen of Persia; and by that title you shall soon be proclaimed throughout the whole kingdom. To-morrow the ceremony shall be performed in my capital with a pomp and magnificence never yet beheld; which will plainly shew that you are my queen and my lawful wife. This should long ago have been done, had you sooner convinced me of my error: for from the first moment of my seeing you, I have been of the same opinion as now, to love you always, and never to place my affections on any other.

But that I may satisfy myself, and pay you all the respect that is your due, I beseech you, madam, to inform me more particularly of the kingdom and people of the sea, who are altogether unknown to me. I have heard much talk, indeed, of the inhabitants of the sea, but I always looked upon such accounts merely as tales or fables; by what you have

told me, I am convinced there is nothing more true; and I have a proof of it in your own person, who are one of them, and are pleased to condescend to be my wife; which is an honour no other inhabitant on the earth can boast. There is one point however which yet perplexes me; therefore I must beg the favour of you to explain it; that is, I cannot comprehend how it is possible for you to live or move in water without being drowned. There are few amongst us who have the art of staying under water; and they would surely perish, if, after a certain time, according to their activity and strength, they did not come up again.

Sire, replied the queen Gulnare, I shall with pleasure satisfy the king of Persia. We can walk at the bottom of the sea with as much ease as you can upon land; and we can breathe in the water as you do in the air; so that instead of suffocating us, as it does you, it absolutely contributes to the preservation of our lives. What is yet more remarkable is, that it never wets our clothes; so that when we wish to visit the earth, we have no occasion to dry them. Our language is the same with that of the writing engraved upon the seal of the great prophet Solomon the son of David.

I must not forget to inform you further, that the water does not in the least hinder us from seeing: for we can open our eyes without any inconvenience:

and as we have quick, piercing sight, we can discern any object as clearly in the deepest part of the sea as upon land. We have also there a succession of day and night; the moon affords us her light; and even the planets and the stars appear visible to us. I have already spoken of our kingdoms; but as the sea is much more spacious than the earth, so there are a great number of them, and of great extent. They are divided into provinces; and in each province are several great cities well peopled. In short there is an infinite number of nations, differing in manners and customs, as they do on the earth.

The palaces of the kings and princes are sumptuous and magnificent. Some of them are constructed of marble of various colours; others of rock-crystal, with which the sea abounds, mother of pearl, coral, and of other materials more valuable; gold, silver, and all sorts of precious stones are more plentiful there than on earth. I say nothing of the pearls, since the largest that ever were seen upon earth would not be valued amongst us; and none but the very lowest rank of citizens would wear them.

As we have a marvellous and incredible agility to transport ourselves whither we please in the twinkling of an eye, we have no occasion for carriages or horses; not but the king has his stables, and his stud of sea horses; but they are seldom used, except upon public feasts or rejoicing days. Some,

after they have trained them, take delight in riding and shewing their skill and dexterity in races; others put them to chariots of mother of pearl, adorned with an infinite number of shells of all sorts, of the liveliest colours. These chariots are open; and in the middle is a throne on which the king sits, and shews himself to the public view of his subjects. The horses are trained to draw by themselves; so that there is no occasion for a charioteer to guide them. I pass over a thousand other curious particulars relating to these sub-marine countries, which would be very entertaining to your majesty; but you must permit me to defer them to a future opportunity, to speak of something of much greater consequence, which is, that the method of delivering, and the way of managing the women of the sea in their lying-in, is very different from those of the women of the earth; and I am afraid to trust myself in the hands of the midwives of this country: therefore, since my safe delivery equally concerns us both, with your majesty's permission, I think it proper, for greater security, to send for my mother and my cousins, to assist at my labour; at the same time to desire the king my brother's company, to whom I have a great desire to be reconciled. They will be glad to see me again, when they understand I am wife to the mighty king of Persia. I beseech your majesty to give me leave to send for them: I am

sure they will be happy to pay their respects to you; and I venture to say you will be pleased to see them.

Madam, replied the king of Persia, you are mistress; do whatever you please; I will endeavour to receive them with all the honours they deserve. But I would fain know how you will acquaint them with what you desire, and when they will arrive, that I may give orders to make preparation for their reception, and go myself in person to meet them. Sire, replied the queen Gulnare, there is no need of these ceremonies; they will be here in a moment; and if your majesty will but step into the closet, and look through the lattice, you shall see the manner of their arrival.

As soon as the king of Persia was in the closet, queen Gulnare ordered one of her women to bring her a fire-pan with a little fire. After that she bade her retire, and shut the door. When she was alone, she took a piece of aloes-wood out of a box, and put it into the fire-pan. As soon as she saw the smoke rise, she repeated some words unknown to the king of Persia, who observed with great attention all that she did. She had no sooner ended, than the sea began to be disturbed. The closet the king was in was so contrived, that looking through the lattice on the same side with the windows that faced the sea, he could plainly perceive it.

At length the sea opened at some distance; and

presently there arose out of it a tall, handsome young man, with whiskers of a sea-green colour; a little behind him, a lady, advanced in years, but of a majestic air, attended by five young ladies, nothing inferior in beauty to the queen Gulnare.

Queen Gulnare immediately came to one of the windows, and saw the king her brother, the queen her mother, and the rest of her relations, who at the same time perceived her also. The company advanced, borne, as it were, upon the surface of the waves. When they came to the edge, they nimbly, one after another, sprung in at the window. King Saleh, the queen her mother, and the rest of her relations, embraced her tenderly on their first entrance, with tears in their eyes.

After queen Gulnare had received them with all imaginable honour, and made them sit down upon a sofa, the queen her mother addressed herself to her: Daughter, said she, I am overjoyed to see you again after so long an absence; and I am confident that your brother and your relations are no less so. Your leaving us without acquainting any one with your intention, involved us in inexpressible concern; and it is impossible to tell you how many tears we have shed on your account. We know of no reason that could induce you to take such a resolution, but what your brother related to us respecting the conversation that passed between him and you. The advice

he gave you seemed to him at that time advantageous for settling you in the world, and suitable to the then posture of our affairs. If you had not approved of his proposal, you ought not to have been so much alarmed; and give me leave to tell you, you took his advice in a different light from what you ought to have done. But no more of this; it serves only to renew the occasion of our sorrow and complaint, which we and you ought to bury for ever in oblivion: give us now an account of all that has happened to you since we saw you last, and of your present situation, but especially let us know if you are married.

Gulnare immediately threw herself at her mother's feet, and kissing her hand, Madam, said she, I own I have been guilty of a fault, and I am indebted to your goodness for the pardon which you are pleased to grant me. What I am going to say, in obedience to your commands, will soon convince you, that it is often in vain for us to have an aversion for certain measures; I have myself experienced that the only thing I had an abhorrence to, is that to which my destiny has led me. She then related the whole of what had befallen her since she quitted the sea for the earth. As soon as she had concluded, and acquainted them with her having been sold to the king of Persia, in whose palace she was at present; Sister, said the king her brother, you have been wrong to suffer so many indignities, but you

can properly blame nobody but yourself; you have it in your power now to free yourself, and I cannot but admire your patience, that you could endure so long a slavery. Rise, and return with us into my kingdom, which I have reconquered from the proud usurper who had made himself master of it.

The king of Persia, who heard these words from the closet where he stood, was in the utmost alarm; Ah! said he to himself, I am ruined, and if my queen, my Gulnare, hearken to this advice, and leave me, I shall surely die, for it is impossible for me to live without her. Queen Gulnare soon put him out of his fears.

Brother, said she smiling, what I have just heard gives me a greater proof than ever of the sincerity of your affection; I could not brook your proposing to me a match with a prince of the earth: now I can scarcely forbear being angry with you for advising me to break the engagement I have made with the most puissant and most renowned monarch in the world. I do not speak here of an engagement between a slave and her master; it would be easy to return the ten thousand pieces of gold he gave for me; but I speak now of a contract between a wife and a husband, and a wife who has not the least reason to complain. He is a religious, wise, and temperate king, and has given me the most essential demonstrations of his love. What can be a greater

proof of the sincerity of his passion, than sending away all his women (of which he had a great number) immediately upon my arrival, and confining himself to me alone? I am now his wife, and he has lately declared me queen of Persia, to share with him in his councils; besides, I am pregnant, and if heaven permit me to give him a son, that will be another motive to engage my affections to him the more.

So that, brother, continued the queen Gulnare, instead of following your advice, you see I have all the reason in the world, not only to love the king of Persia as passionately as he loves me, but also to live and die with him, more out of gratitude than duty. I hope then neither my mother, nor you, nor any of my cousins, will disapprove of the resolution or the alliance I have made, which will do equal honour to the kings of the sea and earth. Excuse me for giving you the trouble of coming hither from the bottom of the deep, to communicate it to you; and to enjoy the pleasure of seeing you after so long a separation.

Sister, replied king Saleh, the proposal I made you of going back with us into my kingdom, upon the recital of your adventures (which I could not hear without concern), was only to let you see how much we all love you, and how much I in particular honour you, and that nothing is so dear to me as

your happiness. Upon the same account then, for my own part, I cannot condemn a resolution so reasonable and so worthy of yourself, after what you have told us of the king of Persia your husband, and the great obligations you owe him; and I am persuaded that the queen our mother will be of the same opinion.

The queen confirmed what her son had spoken, and addressing herself to Gulnare, said, I am glad to hear you are pleased; and I have nothing to add to what your brother has said. I should have been the first to condemn you, had you not expressed all the gratitude you owe to a monarch that loves you so passionately.

As the king of Persia had been extremely concerned under the apprehension of losing his beloved queen, so now he was transported with joy at her resolution never to forsake him; and having no room to doubt of her love after so open a declaration, he resolved to evince his gratitude in every possible way.

While the king was indulging incredible pleasure, queen Gulnare clapped her hands, and immediately some of her slaves entered, whom she had ordered to bring in a collation: as soon as it was served up, she invited the queen her mother, the king her brother, and her cousins to partake. They began to reflect that they were in the palace of a mighty king, who

had never seen or heard of them, and that it would be rudeness to eat at his table without him. This reflection raised a blush in their faces, and in their emotion, their eyes glowing like fire, they breathed flames at their mouths and nostrils.

This unexpected sight put the king of Persia, who was totally ignorant of the cause of it, into a dreadful consternation. Queen Gulnare suspecting this, and understanding the intention of her relations, rose from her seat, and told them she would be back in a moment. She went directly to the closet, and by her presence recovered the king of Persia from his surprise; Sir, said she, I doubt not but that your majesty is well pleased with the acknowledgment I have made of the many favours for which I am indebted to you. I might have complied with the wishes of my relations, and gone back with them into their dominions; but I am not capable of such ingratitude, for which I should have been the first to condemn myself. Ah! my queen, cried the king of Persia, speak no more of your obligations to me; you have none; I am under so many to you, that I shall never be able to repay them. I never thought it possible you could have loved me so tenderly as you do, and as you have made appear to me in the most endearing manner. Ah! sir, replied Gulnare, could I do less? I fear I have not done enough, considering all the honours that your ma-

jesty has heaped upon me; and it is impossible for me to remain insensible of your love, after so many convincing proofs as you have given me.

But, sir, continued Gulnare, let us drop this subject, and give me leave to assure you of the sincere friendship the queen my mother and the king my brother are pleased to honour you with; they earnestly desire to see you, and tell you so themselves: I intended to have had some conversation with them by ordering a banquet for them, before I introduced them to your majesty, but they are impatient to pay their respects to you; and therefore I beseech your majesty to be pleased to honour them with your presence.

Madam, said the king of Persia, I should be glad to salute persons who have the honour to be so nearly related to you, but I am afraid of the flames they breathe at their mouths and nostrils. Sir, replied the queen laughing, you need not in the least fear those flames, which are nothing but a sign of their unwillingness to eat in your palace, without your honouring them with your presence, and eating with them.

The king of Persia, encouraged by these words, rose and went into the apartment with his queen Gulnare. She presented him to the queen her mother, to the king her brother, and to her other relations, who instantly threw themselves at his feet,

with their faces to the ground. The king of Persia ran to them, and lifting them up, embraced them one after another. After they were all seated, king Saleh began: Sir, said he to the king of Persia, we are at a loss for words to express our joy, to think that the queen my sister, in her disgrace, should have the happiness of falling under the protection of so powerful a monarch. We can assure you, she is not unworthy of the high rank to which you have been pleased to raise her; and we have always had so much love and tenderness for her, that we could never think of parting with her to any of the puissant princes of the sea, who have often demanded her in marriage before she came of age. Heaven has reserved her for you, and we have no better way of testifying our gratitude for the favour it has done her, than beseeching it to grant your majesty a long and happy life with her, and to crown you with prosperity and satisfaction.

Certainly, replied the king of Persia, heaven reserved her for me, as you observe. I love her with so tender and ardent a passion, that I am satisfied I never loved any woman till I saw her. I cannot sufficiently thank either the queen her mother or you, prince, or your whole family, for the generosity with which you have consented to receive me into an alliance so glorious to me as yours. So saying he invited them to take part of the collation, and he and

his queen sat down with them. After the collation, the king of Persia conversed with them till it was very late; and when they thought it convenient to retire, he waited upon them himself to the several apartments he had ordered to be prepared for them.

The king of Persia treated his illustrious guests with continual feasts; in which he omitted nothing that might shew his grandeur and magnificence, and insensibly prevailed with them to stay with him till the queen was brought to bed. When the time of her lying-in drew near, he gave particular orders that nothing should be wanting proper for such an occasion. At length she was brought to bed of a son, to the great joy of the queen her mother, who assisted at the labour, and presented him to the king.

The king of Persia received this present with a joy easier to be imagined than expressed. The young prince being of a beautiful countenance, he thought no name so proper for him as that of *Beder*, which in the Arabian language signifies the *Full Moon*. To return thanks to heaven, he was very liberal in his alms to the poor, caused the prison doors to be set open, and gave all his slaves of both sexes their liberty. He distributed vast sums among the ministers and holy men of his religion. He also gave large donations to his courtiers, besides a considerable sum that was thrown amongst the people;

and by proclamation, ordered rejoicings to be kept for several days through the whole city.

One day, after the queen was recovered, as the king of Persia, Gulnare, the queen her mother, king Saleh her brother, and the princesses their relations, were discoursing together in her majesty's bed-chamber, the nurse came in with the young prince Beder in her arms. King Saleh as soon as he saw him, ran to embrace him, and taking him in his arms, kissed and caressed him with the greatest demonstrations of tenderness. He took several turns with him about the room, dancing and tossing him about, when all of a sudden, through a transport of joy, the window being open, he sprung out, and plunged with him into the sea.

The king of Persia, who expected no such sight, believing he should either see the prince his son no more, or else that he should see him drowned, was overwhelmed in affliction. Sir, said queen Gulnare, (with a quiet and undisturbed countenance, the better to comfort him), let your majesty fear nothing; the young prince is my son as well as yours, and I do not love him less than yourself. You see I am not alarmed; neither in truth ought I to be. He runs no risk, and you will soon see the king his uncle appear with him again, and bring him back safe. Although he be borne of your blood, he is equally of mine, and will have the same advantage his uncle and I possess,

of living equally in the sea, and upon the land. The queen his mother and the princesses his relations affirmed the same thing; yet all they said had no effect on the king, who could not recover from his alarm till he again saw prince Beder.

The sea at length became troubled, when immediately king Saleh arose with the young prince in his arms, and holding him up in the air, re-entered at the window from which he had leaped. The king of Persia being overjoyed to see prince Beder again, and astonished that he was as calm as before he lost sight of him; king Saleh said, Sir, was not your majesty in alarm, when you first saw me plunge into the sea with the prince my nephew? Alas! prince, answered the king of Persia, I cannot express my concern. I thought him lost from that very moment, and you now restore life to me by bringing him again. I thought as much, replied king Saleh, though you had not the least reason to apprehend danger; for before I plunged into the sea, I pronounced over him certain mysterious words, which were engraven on the seal of the great Solomon the son of David. We practise the like in relation to all those children that are born in the regions at the bottom of the sea, by virtue whereof they receive the same privileges as we have over those people who inhabit the earth. From what your majesty has observed, you may easily see what advantage your son

prince Beder has acquired by his birth on the part of his mother Gulnare my sister: for as long as he lives, and as often as he pleases, he will be at liberty to plunge into the sea, and traverse the vast empires it contains in its bosom.

Having so spoken, king Saleh, who had restored prince Beder to his nurse's arms, opened a box he had fetched from his palace in the little time he had disappeared, which was filled with three hundred diamonds, as large as pigeons' eggs; a like number of rubies of extraordinary size; as many emerald wands, each half a foot long, and thirty strings or necklaces of pearl consisting each of ten feet. Sir, said he to the king of Persia, presenting him with this box, when I was first summoned by the queen my sister, I knew not what part of the earth she was in, or that she had the honour to be married to so great a monarch. This made us come without a present. As we cannot express how much we have been obliged to your majesty, I beg you to accept this small token of gratitude in acknowledgment of the many favours you have been pleased to shew her, wherein we take equal interest.

It is impossible to express how greatly the king of Persia was surprised at the sight of so much riches, enclosed in so little compass. What! prince, cried he, do you call so inestimable a present a small token of your gratitude, when you never have been

indebted to me? I declare once more you have never been in the least obliged to me, neither the queen your mother nor you. I esteem myself but too happy in the consent you have given to the alliance I have contracted with you. Madam, continued he, turning to Gulnare, the king your brother has put me into the greatest confusion; and I would beg of him to permit me to refuse his present, were I not afraid of disobliging him: do you therefore endeavour to obtain his leave that I may be excused accepting it.

Sir, replied king Saleh, I am not at all surprised that your majesty thinks this present so extraordinary. I know you are not accustomed upon earth to see precious stones of this quality and number: but if you knew, as I do, the mines whence these jewels were taken, and that it is in my power to form a treasure greater than those of all the kings of the earth, you would wonder we should have the boldness to make you so small a present. I beseech you therefore not to regard its trifling value, but consider the sincere friendship which obliges us to offer it to you, and not give us the mortification of refusing it. These engaging expressions obliged the king of Persia to accept the present, for which he returned many thanks both to king Saleh and the queen his mother.

A few days after, king Saleh gave the king of

Persia to understand, that the queen his mother, the princesses his relations, and himself, could have no greater pleasure than to spend their whole lives at his court; but that having been so long absent from their own kingdom, where their presence was absolutely necessary, they begged of him to excuse them if they took leave of him and queen Gulnare. The king of Persia assured them, he was sorry it was not in his power to return their visit in their own dominions; but added, As I am persuaded you will not forget Gulnare, I hope I shall have the honour to see you again more than once [22].

Many tears were shed on both sides upon their separation. King Saleh departed first; but the queen his mother and the princesses his relations were obliged to force themselves from the embraces of Gulnare, who could not prevail with herself to let them go. This royal company were no sooner out of sight, than the king of Persia said to Gulnare, Madam, I should have looked upon the person who had pretended to pass those upon me for true wonders, of which I myself have been eye-witness from the time I have been honoured with your illustrious family at my court, as one who would have abused my credulity. But I cannot refuse to believe my senses; and shall remember them while I live, and never cease to bless heaven for directing you to me, in preference to any other prince.

Beder was brought up and educated in the palace under the care of the king and queen of Persia, who both saw him grow and increase in beauty to their great satisfaction. He gave them yet greater pleasure as he advanced in years, by his continual sprightliness, his agreeable manners, and the justness and vivacity of his wit: and this satisfaction was the more sensible, because king Saleh his uncle, the queen his grandmother, and the princesses his relations, came from time to time to partake of it.

He was easily taught to read and write, and was instructed with the same facility in all the sciences that became a prince of his rank.

When he arrived at the age of fifteen, he acquitted himself in all his exercises with infinitely better address and grace than his masters. He was withal wise and prudent. The king, who had almost from his cradle discovered in him virtues so necessary for a monarch, and who moreover began to perceive the infirmities of old age coming upon himself every day, would not stay till death gave him possession of his throne, but purposed to resign it to him. He had no great difficulty to make his council consent to this arrangement: and the people heard his resolution with so much the more joy, as they conceived prince Beder worthy to govern them. In a word, as the king had not for a long time appeared in public, they had the opportunity of ob-

serving that he had not that disdainful, proud, and distant air, which most princes have, who look upon all below them with scorn and contempt. They saw, on the contrary, that he treated all mankind with that goodness which invited them to approach him; that he heard favourably all who had any thing to say to him; that he answered every body with a goodness that was peculiar to him; and that he refused nobody any thing that had the least appearance of justice.

The day for the ceremony was appointed, when in the midst of the whole assembly, which was then more numerous than ordinary, the king of Persia came down from his throne, took the crown from his head, put it on that of prince Beder, and having seated him in his place, kissed his hand as a token that he resigned his authority to him. After which he took his place among the crowd of viziers and emirs below the throne.

Hereupon the viziers, emirs, and other principal officers, came immediately and threw themselves at the new king's feet, taking each the oath of fidelity according to their rank. Then the grand vizier made a report of divers important matters, on which the young king gave judgment with that admirable prudence and sagacity that surprised all the council. He next turned out several governors convicted of mal-administration, and put others in their room,

with such wonderful and just discernment, as exacted the acclamations of every body, which were so much the more honourable, as flattery had no share in them. He at length left the council, accompanied by his father, and went to wait on his mother queen Gulnare at her apartment. The queen no sooner saw him coming with his crown upon his head, than she ran to him and embraced him with tenderness, wishing him a long and prosperous reign.

The first year of his reign king Beder acquitted himself of all his royal functions with great assiduity. Above all, he took care to inform himself of the state of his affairs, and all that might any way contribute towards the happiness of his people. Next year, having left the administration to his council, under the direction of his father, he left his capital, under pretence of diverting himself with hunting; but his real intention was to visit all the provinces of his kingdom, that he might reform abuses, establish good order, and deprive all ill-minded princes, his neighbours, of any opportunities of attempting any thing against the security and tranquillity of his subjects, by shewing himself on his frontiers.

It required no less than a whole year for the young monarch to execute a design so worthy of him. Soon after his return, the old king his father fell so dangerously ill, that he knew at once he should never recover. He waited for his last moment

with great tranquillity, and his only care was to recommend to the ministers and other lords of his son's court, to persevere in the fidelity they had sworn to him: and there was not one but willingly renewed his oath as freely as at first. He died at length, to the great grief of king Beder and queen Gulnare, who caused his corpse to be borne to a stately mausoleum, worthy of his rank and dignity.

The funeral obsequies ended, king Beder found no difficulty to comply with that ancient custom in Persia to mourn for the dead a whole month, and not to be seen by any body during that time. He had mourned the death of his father his whole life, had he yielded to his excessive affliction, and had it been right for a great prince thus to abandon himself to sorrow. During this interval the queen, Gulnare's mother, and king Saleh, together with the princesses their relations, arrived at the Persian court to condole with their relations.

When the month was expired, the king could not refuse admittance to the grand vizier and the other lords of his court, who besought him to lay aside his mourning, to shew himself to his subjects, and take upon him the administration of affairs as before.

He shewed so much reluctance to comply with their request, that the grand vizier was forced to take upon him to say; Sir, it were needless to represent

to your majesty, that it belongs only to women to persist in perpetual mourning. We doubt not but you are fully convinced of this, and that it is not your intention to follow their example. Neither our tears nor yours are capable of restoring life to the good king your father, though we should lament him all our days. He has submitted to the common law of all men, which subjects them to pay the indispensable tribute of death. Yet we cannot say absolutely that he is dead, since we see him in your sacred person. He did not himself doubt, when he was dying, but he should revive in you, and to your majesty it belongs to shew that he was not deceived.

King Beder could no longer oppose such pressing instances: he laid aside his mourning; and after he had resumed the royal habit and ornaments, began to provide for the necessities of his kingdom and subjects with the same assiduity as before his father's death. He acquitted himself with universal approbation: and as he was exact in maintaining the ordinances of his predecessor, the people did not perceive they had changed their sovereign.

King Saleh, who was returned to his dominions in the sea with the queen his mother and the princesses, no sooner saw that king Beder had resumed the government, but he at the end of the year came alone to visit him; and king Beder and queen Gulnare were overjoyed to see him. One evening, talk-

ing of various matters, king Saleh fell insensibly on the praises of the king his nephew, and expressed to the queen his sister how glad he was to see him govern so prudently, as to acquire such high reputation, not only among his neighbours, but more remote princes. King Beder, who could not bear to hear himself so well spoken of, and not being willing, through good manners, to interrupt the king his uncle, turned on one side, and feigned to be asleep, leaning his head against a cushion that was behind him.

From these commendations, which regarded only the conduct and genius of Beder, king Saleh came to speak of the perfections of his person, which he extolled as prodigies, having nothing equal to them upon earth, or in all the kingdoms under the waters, with which he was acquainted.

Sister, said he, I wonder you have not thought of marrying him: if I mistake not, he is in his twentieth year; and, at that age, no prince ought to be suffered to be without a wife. I will think of a match for him myself, since you will not, and marry him to some princess of our lower world, that may be worthy of him.

Brother, replied queen Gulnare, you call to my attention what I must own has never occured to me. As he discovered no inclination for marriage, I never thought of mentioning it to him. I like your pro-

posal of one of our princesses; and I desire you to name one so beautiful and accomplished that the king my son may be obliged to love her.

I know one, replied king Saleh, softly; but before I tell you who she is, let us see if the king my nephew be asleep, and I will tell you afterwards why it is necessary we should take that precaution. Queen Gulnare turned about and looked at her son, and thought she had no reason to doubt but he was in a profound sleep. King Beder, nevertheless, far from sleeping, redoubled his attention, unwilling to lose any thing the king his uncle said with so much secrecy. There is no necessity for your speaking so low, said the queen to the king her brother; you may speak out with freedom, without fear of being heard.

It is by no means proper, replied king Saleh, that the king my nephew should as yet have any knowledge of what I am going to say. Love, you know, sometimes enters at the ear, and it is not necessary he should thus conceive a passion for the lady I am about to name. Indeed I see many difficulties to be surmounted, not on the lady's part, as I hope, but on that of her father. I need only mention to you the princess Jehaun-ara, daughter of the king of Samandal.

How! brother, replied queen Gulnare, is not the princess yet married? I remember to have seen her

before I left your palace; she was then about eighteen months old, surprisingly beautiful, and must needs be the wonder of the world, if her charms have increased with her years. The few years she is older than the king my son ought not to prevent us from doing our utmost to effect the match. Let me but know the difficulties in the way, and we will surmount them.

Sister, replied king Saleh, the greatest difficulty is, that the king of Samandal is insupportably vain, looking upon all others as his inferiors: it is not likely we shall easily get him to enter into this alliance. I will however go to him in person, and demand of him the princess his daughter; and, in case he refuses her, we will address ourselves elsewhere, where we shall be more favourably heard. For this reason, as you may perceive, added he, it is as well for the king my nephew not to know any thing of our design, till we have the consent of the king of Samandal. They discoursed a little longer upon this point, and, before they parted, agreed that king Saleh should forthwith return to his own dominions, and demand the princess for the king of Persia his nephew.

This done, queen Gulnare and king Saleh, who believed king Beder asleep, agreed to awake him before they retired; and he dissembled so well, that he seemed to wake from a profound sleep. He had

heard every word, and the character they gave of the princess had inflamed his heart with a new passion. He had conceived such an idea of her beauty, that the desire of possessing her made him pass the night very uneasy without closing his eyes.

Next day king Saleh proposed taking leave of Gulnare and the king his nephew. The young king, who knew his uncle would not have departed so soon but to go and promote without loss of time his happiness, changed colour when he heard him mention his departure. His passion was become so violent, it would not suffer him to wait so long for the sight of his mistress as would be required to accomplish the marriage. He more than once resolved to desire his uncle to bring her away with him: but as he did not wish to let the queen his mother understand he knew any thing of what had passed, he desired him only to stay with him one day more, that they might hunt together, intending to take that opportunity to discover his mind to him.

The day for hunting was fixed, and king Beder had many opportunities of being alone with his uncle; but he had not courage to acquaint him with his design.

In the heat of the chace, when king Saleh was separated from him, and not one of his officers or attendants was near him, he alighted by a rivulet;

and having tied his horse to a tree, which, with several others growing along the banks, afforded a very pleasing shade, he laid himself on the grass, and gave free course to his tears, which flowed in great abundance, accompanied with many sighs. He remained a good while in this condition, absorbed in thought, without speaking a word.

King Saleh, in the mean time, missing the king his nephew, began to be much concerned to know what was become of him; but could meet no one who could give any tidings of him. He therefore left his company to seek for him, and at length perceived him at a distance. He had observed the day before, and more plainly that day, that he was not so lively as he used to be; and that, if he was asked a question, he either answered not at all, or nothing to the purpose; but never in the least suspected the cause. As soon as he saw him lying in that disconsolate posture, he immediately guessed he had not only heard what had passed between him and queen Gulnare, but was become passionately in love. He alighted at some distance from him, and having tied his horse to a tree, came upon him so softly, that he heard him pronounce the following words:

Amiable princess of the kingdom of Samandal, I have no doubt had but an imperfect sketch of your incomparable beauty; I hold you to be still more beautiful in preference to all the princesses in the world,

and to excel them as much as the sun does the moon and stars. I would this moment go and offer you my heart, if I knew where to find you; it belongs to you, and no princess shall be possessor of it but yourself!

King Saleh would hear no more; he advanced immediately, and discovered himself to Beder. From what I see, nephew, said he, you heard what the queen your mother and I said the other day of the princess Jehaun-ara. It was not our intention you should have known any thing respecting her, and we thought you were asleep. My dear uncle, replied king Beder, I heard every word, and have sufficiently experienced the effect you foretold; which it was not in your power to prevent. I detained you on purpose to acquaint you with my love before your departure; but the shame of disclosing my weakness, if it be any to love a princess so worthy of my affection, sealed up my mouth. I beseech you then, by the friendship you profess for a prince who has the honour to be so nearly allied to you, that you would pity me, and not wait to procure me the consent of the divine Jehaun-ara, till you have gained that of the king of Samandal that I may marry his daughter, unless you had rather see me die with love, before I behold her.

These words of the king of Persia greatly embarrassed king Saleh. He represented to him how

difficult it was to give him the satisfaction he desired, and that he could not do it without carrying him along with him; which might be of dangerous consequence, since his presence was so absolutely necessary in his kingdom. He conjured him, therefore, to moderate his passion, till such time as he had put things into a train to satisfy him, assuring him he would use his utmost diligence, and would come to acquaint him in a few days. But these reasons were not sufficient to satisfy the king of Persia. Cruel uncle, said he, I find you do not love me so much as you pretended, and that you had rather see me die than grant the first request I ever made.

I am ready to convince your majesty, replied king Saleh, that I would do any thing to serve you; but as for carrying you along with me, I cannot do that till I have spoken to the queen your mother. What would she say of you and me? if she consents, I am ready to do all you would have me, and will join my intreaties to yours. You cannot be ignorant, replied the king of Persia, that the queen my mother would never willingly part with me; and therefore this excuse does but farther convince me of your unkindness. If you really love me, as you would have me believe, you must return to your kingdom immediately, and take me with you.

King Saleh, finding himself obliged to yield to his nephew's importunity, drew from his finger a

ring, on which were engraven the same mysterious names of God that were upon Solomon's seal, which had wrought so many wonders by their virtue. Here, take this ring, said he, put it on your finger, and fear neither the waters of the sea, nor their depth. The king of Persia took the ring, and when he had put it on his finger, king Saleh said to him, Do as I do. At the same time they both mounted lightly up into the air, and made towards the sea, which was not far distant, and they both plunged into it.

The sea-king was not long in arriving at his palace, with the king of Persia, whom he immediately carried to the queen's apartment, and presented to her. The king of Persia kissed the queen his grandmother's hands, and she embraced him with great demonstrations of joy. I do not ask you how you do, said she, I see you are very well, and am rejoiced at it; but I desire to know how my daughter your mother queen Gulnare does? The king of Persia took great care not to let her know that he had come away without taking leave of her; on the contrary he told her, the queen his mother was in perfect health, and had enjoined him to pay her duty to her. The queen then presented him to the princesses; and while he was in conversation with them, she left him, and went with king Saleh into a closet, who told her how the king of Persia was fallen in

love with the princess Jehaun-ara, upon the bare relation of her beauty, and contrary to his intention; that he had, against his own wishes, brought him along with him, and that he was going to concert measures to procure the princess for him in marriage.

Although king Saleh was, to do him justice, perfectly innocent of the king of Persia's passion, yet the queen could hardly forgive his indiscretion in mentioning the princess Jehaun-ara before him. Your imprudence is not to be forgiven, said she; can you think that the king of Samandal, whose character is so well known, will have greater consideration for you, than the many other kings to whom he has refused his daughter, with such evident contempt? would you have him send you away with the same confusion?

Madam, replied king Saleh, I have already told you it was contrary to my intention that the king my nephew heard what I related of the beauty of the princess to the queen my sister. The fault is committed, and we must consider what a violent passion he has for this princess, and that he will die with grief and affliction, if we do not speedily obtain her for him. For my part, I shall omit nothing that can contribute to effect their union: since I was, though innocently, the cause of the malady, I will do all I can to remedy it. I hope, madam, you will

approve of my resolution, to go myself and wait on the king of Samandal, with a rich present of precious stones, and demand the princess his daughter of him for the king of Persia. I have some reason to believe he will not refuse, but will be pleased with an alliance with one of the greatest potentates of the earth.

It were to have been wished, replied the queen, that we had not been under a necessity of making this demand, since the success of our attempt is not so certain as we could desire; but since my grandson's peace and content depend upon it, I freely give my consent. But, above all, I charge you, since you well know the humour of the king of Samandal, that you take care to speak to him with due respect, and in a manner that cannot possibly offend him.

The queen prepared the present herself, composing it of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and strings of pearl; all which she put into a rich box. Next morning king Saleh took leave of her majesty and the king of Persia, and departed with a chosen and small troop of officers, and attendants. He soon arrived at the kingdom, and the palace of the king of Samandal, who delayed not to give him audience. He rose from his throne as soon as he perceived him; and king Saleh, forgetting his character for some moments, knowing whom he had to deal with,

prostrated himself at his feet, wishing him the accomplishment of all his desires. The king of Samandal stooped to raise him, and after he had placed him on his left hand, told him he was welcome, and asked him if there was any thing he could do to serve him.

Sir, answered king Saleh, though I should have no other motive than that of paying my respects to the most potent, most prudent, and most valiant prince in the world, feeble would be my language to express how much I honour your majesty. Could you penetrate into my inmost soul, you would be convinced of the great veneration I have for you, and of my ardent desire to testify my attachment. Having spoke these words, he took the box of jewels from one of his servants, and having opened it, presented it to the king, imploring him to accept of it for his sake.

Prince, replied the king of Samandal, you would not make me such a present unless you had a request proportionable to it to propose. If there be any thing in my power to grant, you may freely command me, and I shall feel the greatest pleasure in complying with your wishes. Speak, and tell me frankly wherein I can serve you?

I must own ingenuously, replied king Saleh, I have a boon to ask of your majesty; and I shall take care to ask nothing but what is in your power to

bestow. The thing depends so absolutely on yourself, that it would be to no purpose to ask it of any one else. I ask it then with all possible earnestness, and I beg of you not to refuse me. If it be so, replied the king of Samandal, you have nothing to do but acquaint me what it is, and you shall see after what manner I can oblige when it is in my power.

Sir, said king Saleh, after the confidence with which your majesty has been pleased to inspire me, I will not dissemble any longer, that I came to beg of you to honour our house with your alliance by the marriage of your daughter, and to strengthen the good understanding that has so long subsisted between our two crowns.

At these words the king of Samandal burst into a loud laugh, falling back in his throne against a cushion that supported him, and with an imperious and scornful air, said, King Saleh, I have always hitherto thought you a prince of great wisdom, and prudence; but what you say convinces me I was mistaken. Tell me, I beseech you, where was your wit or discretion, when you formed to yourself such a chimera as you have proposed to me? Could you conceive a thought of aspiring in marriage to a princess, the daughter of so powerful a monarch as myself? You ought to have considered the great distance between us, and not run the risk of losing in a moment the esteem I always had for you.

King Saleh was hurt at this affronting answer, and could scarcely restrain his resentment; however he replied with all possible moderation, God reward your majesty as you deserve! I have the honour to inform you, I do not demand the princess your daughter in marriage for myself; had I done even that, your majesty and the princess, so far from being offended, should have thought it an honour done to both. Your majesty well knows I am one of the kings of the sea as well as yourself; that my ancestors yield not in antiquity to any royal house; and that the kingdom I inherit is no less potent and flourishing than your own. If your majesty had not interrupted me, you had soon understood that the favour I asked was not for myself, but for the young king of Persia my nephew, whose power and grandeur, no less than his personal good qualities, cannot be unknown to you. Every body acknowledges the princess Jehaun-ara to be the most beautiful under ocean: but it is no less true, that the king of Persia is the handsomest and most accomplished prince on earth. Thus the favour that is asked being likely to redound to the honour both of your majesty and the princess your daughter, you ought not to doubt that your consent to an alliance so equal will be unanimously approved in all the kingdoms of the sea. The princess is

worthy of the king of Persia, and the king of Persia is no less worthy of her.

The king of Samandal had not permitted king Saleh to speak so long, but that rage deprived him of all power of speech. At length, however, he broke out into outrageous and insulting expressions, unworthy of a great king. Dog, cried he, dare you talk to me after this manner, and so much as mention my daughter's name in my presence! can you think the son of your sister Gulnare worthy to come in competition with my daughter? Who are you? Who was your father? Who is your sister? And who your nephew? Was not his father a dog, and the son of a dog, like you? Guards, seize the insolent wretch, and strike off his head.

The few officers who were about the king of Samandal were immediately going to obey his orders, when king Saleh, who was in the flower of his age, nimble and vigorous, got from them, before they could draw their sabres; and having reached the palace-gate, found there a thousand men of his relations and friends, well armed and equipped, who were just arrived. The queen his mother having considered the small number of attendants he had taken with him, and foreseeing the reception he would probably meet from the king of Samandal, had sent these troops to protect and defend him in

case of danger, ordering them to make haste. Those of his relations who were at the head of this troop had reason to rejoice at their seasonable arrival, when they beheld him and his attendants running in great disorder, and pursued. Sire, cried his friends, the moment he joined them, Who has insulted you? We are ready to revenge you: you need only command us.

King Saleh related his case to them in few words, and putting himself at the head of a troop, while some seized the gates, he re-entered the palace. The few officers and guards who had pursued him, being soon dispersed, he forced the king of Samandal's apartment, who, being abandoned by his attendants, was soon seized. King Saleh left sufficient guards to secure his person, and then went from apartment to apartment, to search after the princess Jehaun-ara. But she, on the first alarm, had, together with her women, sprung up to the surface of the sea, and escaped to a desert island.

While this passed in the palace of the king of Samandal, those of king Saleh's attendants who had fled at the first menaces of that king, put the queen mother into terrible consternation, on relating the danger of her son. King Beder, who was present at the time, was the more concerned, as he looked upon himself as the principal author of the mischief that might ensue: therefore, not caring to abide the

queen's presence any longer, whilst she was giving the orders necessary at that conjuncture, he darted up from the bottom of the sea; and not knowing how to find his way to the kingdom of Persia, happened to land on the island where the princess Jehaun-ara had saved herself.

The prince, not a *little* disturbed in mind, seated himself under the shade of a large tree, surrounded by others. Whilst he was endeavouring to recover himself, he heard somebody talking, but was too far off to understand what was said. He arose, and advanced softly towards the place whence the sound proceeded, where, among the branches, he perceived a beauty that dazzled him. Doubtless, said he, within himself, stopping and considering her with great attention, this must be the princess Jehaun-ara, whom fear has obliged to abandon her father's palace; or if it be not, she no less deserves my love. This said, he came forward, and discovering himself, approached the princess with profound reverence. Madam, said he, I can never sufficiently thank Heaven for the favour it has done me in presenting to my eyes so much beauty. A greater happiness could not have befallen me than this opportunity to offer you my services. I beseech you, therefore, madam, to accept them, it being impossible that a lady in this solitude should not want assistance.

True, my lord, replied Jehaun-ara, sorrowfully; it is not a little extraordinary for a lady of my quality to be in this situation. I am a princess, daughter of the king of Samandal, and my name is Jehaun-ara. I was at ease in my father's palace, in my apartment, when suddenly I heard a dreadful noise: news was immediately brought me, that king Saleh, I know not for what reason, had forced the palace, seized the king my father, and murdered all the guards who made any resistance. I had only time to save myself, and escape hither from his violence.

At these words king Beder began to be concerned that he had quitted his grandmother so hastily, without staying to hear from her an explanation of the news that had been brought. But he was, on the other hand, overjoyed to find that the king his uncle had rendered himself master of the king of Samandal's person, not doubting but he would consent to give up the princess for his liberty. Adorable princess, continued he, your concern is most just, but it is easy to put an end both to that and your father's captivity. You will agree with me, when I shall tell you that I am Beder king of Persia, and king Saleh is my uncle: I assure you, madam, he has no design to seize the king your father's dominions; his only intention is to obtain your father's consent, that I may have the honour and happiness of being his son-in-law. I had already

given my heart to you, upon the bare relation of your beauty and charms; and now, far from repenting, I beg of you to accept it, and to be assured that I will love you as long as I live. I dare flatter myself you will not refuse this favour, but be ready to acknowledge that a king, who quitted his dominions purely on your account, deserves some acknowledgment. Permit me then, beauteous princess! to have the honour to present you to the king my uncle; and the king your father shall no sooner have consented to our marriage, than king Saleh will leave him sovereign of his dominions as before.

This declaration of king Beder did not produce the effect he expected. It is true, the princess no sooner saw him, than his person, air, and the grace wherewith he accosted her, led her to regard him as one who would not have been disagreeable to her; but when she heard that he had been the occasion of all the ill treatment her father had suffered, of the grief and fright she had endured, and especially the necessity she was reduced to of flying her country; she looked upon him as an enemy with whom she ought to have no connection. Whatever inclination she might have to agree to the marriage which he desired, she determined never to consent, reflecting that one of the reasons her father might have against this match might be, that king Beder was son of a king of the earth.

She would not, however, let king Beder know her resentment; but sought an occasion to deliver herself dexterously out of his hands; and seeming in the mean time to have a great kindness for him, Are you then, said she, with all possible civility, son of the queen Gulnare, so famous for her wit and beauty? I am glad of it, and rejoice that you are the son of so worthy a mother. The king my father was much in the wrong so strongly to oppose our union: had he but seen you, he must have consented to make us happy. Saying so, she reached forth her hand to him as a token of friendship.

King Beder, believing himself arrived at the very pinnacle of happiness, held forth his hand, and taking that of the princess, stooped down to kiss it, when she, pushing him back, and spitting in his face for want of water to throw at him, said, Wretch, quit the form of a man, and take that of a white bird, with a red bill and feet. Upon her pronouncing these words, king Beder was immediately changed into a bird of that description, to his great surprise and mortification. Take him, said she to one of her women, and carry him to the Dry Island. This island was only one frightful rock, where not a drop of water was to be had.

The waiting-woman took the bird, but in executing her princess's orders, had compassion on king Beder's misfortune. It would be great pity, said

she to herself, to let a prince so worthy to live die of hunger and thirst. The princess, who is good and gentle, will, it may be, repent of this cruel order, when she comes to herself; it were better that I carried him to a place where he may die a natural death. She accordingly carried him to a well-frequented island, and left him in a charming plain, planted with all sorts of fruit-trees, and watered by divers rivulets.

Let us return to king Saleh. After he had sought for the princess Jehaun-ara to no purpose, he caused the king of Samandal to be shut up in his own palace, under a strong guard; and having given the necessary orders for governing the kingdom in his absence, returned to give the queen his mother an account of what he had done. The first question he asked on his arrival was, Where was the king his nephew? and he learned with great surprise and vexation that he could not be found. News being brought me, said the queen, of the danger you were in at the palace of the king of Samandal, whilst I was giving orders to send you other troops to avenge you, he disappeared. He must have been alarmed at hearing of your being in such great danger, and did not think himself in sufficient security with us.

This news exceedingly afflicted king Saleh, who now repented being so easily wrought upon by king Beder as to carry him away with him without his

mother's consent. He sent every where to seek for him, but could hear no tidings of him; and instead of the joy he felt at having carried on so far the marriage, which he looked upon as his own work, his grief for this accident was more mortifying. Whilst he was under this suspense about his nephew, he left his kingdom under the administration of his mother, and went to govern that of the king of Samandal, whom he continued to keep with great vigilance, though with all due respect to his character.

The same day that king Saleh returned to the kingdom of Samandal, queen Gulnare arrived at the court of the queen her mother. The princess was not at all surprised to find her son did not return the same day he set out: it being not uncommon for him to go farther than he proposed in the heat of the chace; but when she saw he neither returned the next day, nor the day after, she began to be alarmed, as may easily be imagined from her affection for him. This alarm was augmented, when the officers, who had accompanied the king, and were obliged to return after they had for a long time sought in vain both for him and his uncle, came and told her majesty they must of necessity have come to some harm, or must be together in some place which they could not guess; since, notwithstanding all the diligence they had used,

they could hear no tidings of them. Their horses indeed they had found, but as for their persons, they knew not where to look for them. The queen hearing this, had resolved to dissemble and conceal her affliction, bidding the officers to search once more with their utmost diligence; but in the mean time she plunged into the sea, to satisfy herself as to the suspicion she had entertained that king Saleh must have carried his nephew with him.

This great queen would have been more affectionately received by her mother, had she not, on first seeing her, guessed the occasion of her coming. Daughter, said she, I plainly perceive you are not come hither to visit me; you come to inquire after the king your son; and the only news I can tell you will augment both your grief and mine. I no sooner saw him arrive in our territories, than I rejoiced; yet when I came to understand he had come away without your knowledge, I began to participate with you the concern you must needs suffer. Then she related to her with what zeal king Saleh went to demand the princess Jehaun-ara in marriage for king Beder, and what had happened, till her son disappeared. I have sought diligently after him, added she, and the king my son, who is but just gone to govern the kingdom of Samandal, has done all that lay in his power. All our endeavours

have hitherto proved unsuccessful, but we must hope nevertheless to see him again, perhaps when we least expect it.

Queen Gulnare was not satisfied with this hope: she looked upon the king her son as lost, and lamented him bitterly, laying all the blame on the king his uncle. The queen her mother made her consider the necessity of not yielding too much to grief. The king your brother, said she, ought not, it is true, to have talked to you so inconsiderately about that marriage, nor ever have consented to carry away the king my grandson, without acquainting you; yet, since it is not certain that the king of Persia is absolutely lost, you ought to neglect nothing to preserve his kingdom for him: lose then no more time, but return to your capital; your presence there will be necessary, and it will not be difficult for you to preserve the public peace, by causing it to be published, that the king of Persia was gone to visit his grandmother.

This was sufficient to oblige queen Gulnare to yield. She took leave of the queen her mother, and returned to the palace of the capital of Persia before she had been missed. She immediately despatched persons to recall the officers she had sent after the king, to tell them that she knew where his majesty was, and that they should soon see him again. She also caused the same report to be spread throughout

the city, and governed, in concert with the prime minister and council, with the same tranquillity as if the king had been present.

To return to king Beder, whom the princess Jehaun-ara's waiting-woman had left in the island before-mentioned; that monarch was not a little surprised when he found himself alone, and under the form of a bird. He esteemed himself yet more unhappy, in that he knew not where he was, or in what part of the world the kingdom of Persia lay. But if he had known, and had tried the force of his wings, to hazard the traversing so many extensive watery regions, and had reached it, what could he have gained, but the mortification to continue still in the same form, and not to be accounted even a man, much less acknowledged king of Persia. He was forced to remain where he was, live upon such food as birds of his kind were wont to have, and to pass the night on a tree.

A few days afterwards, a peasant, skilled in taking birds with nets, chanced to come to the place where he was; when perceiving so fine a bird, the like of which he had never seen, though he had followed that employment for a long while, he began greatly to rejoice. He employed all his art to ensnare him; and at length succeeded and took him. Overjoyed at so great a prize, which he looked upon to be of more worth than all the other birds he commonly

took, he shut it up in a cage, and carried it to the city. As soon as he was come into the market, a citizen stopt him, and asked how much he would have for his bird?

Instead of answering, the peasant demanded of the citizen what he would do with him in case he should buy him? What wouldst thou have me to do with him, answered the citizen, but roast and eat him? If that be the case, replied the peasant, I suppose you would think me very well paid, if you should give me the smallest piece of silver for him. I set a much higher value upon him, and you should not have him for a piece of gold. Although I am advanced in years, I never saw such a bird in my life. I intend to make a present of him to the king; he will know its value better than you.

Without staying any longer in the market, the peasant went directly to the palace, and placed himself exactly before the king's apartment. His majesty, being at a window where he could see all that passed in the court, no sooner cast his eyes on this beautiful bird, than he sent an officer of his eunuchs to buy it for him. The officer going to the peasant, demanded of him how much he would have for the bird? If it be for his majesty, answered the peasant, I humbly beg of him to accept it of me as a present, and I desire you to carry it to him. The officer took the bird to the king, who found it so great a rarity, that he ordered the same officer to take ten pieces

of gold, and carry them to the peasant, who departed very well satisfied. The king ordered the bird to be put into a magnificent cage, and gave it corn and water in rich vessels.

The king being then ready to mount on horseback to go a hunting, had not time to consider the bird, therefore had it brought to him as soon as he returned. The officer brought the cage, and the king, that he might the better view the bird, took it out himself, and perched it upon his hand. Looking earnestly upon it, he demanded of the officer, if he had seen it eat? Sir, replied the officer, your majesty may observe the vessel with his food is still full, and I have not observed that he has touched any of it. Then the king ordered him meat of divers sorts, that he might take what he liked best.

The table being spread, and dinner served up just as the king had given these orders, as soon as the dishes were placed, the bird, clapping his wings, leaped off the king's hand, flew upon the table, where he began to peck the bread and victuals, sometimes on one plate and sometimes on another. The king was so surprised that he immediately sent the officer of the eunuchs to desire the queen to come and see this wonder. The officer related it to her majesty, and she came forthwith; but she no sooner saw the bird, than she covered her face with her veil, and would have retired. The king, surprised at her pro-

ceeding, as there was none present in the chamber but the eunuchs and the women who attended her, asked the reason of her conduct.

Sir, answered the queen, your majesty will no longer be surprised, when you understand, that this is not as you suppose a bird, but a man. Madam, said the king, more astonished than before, you mean to banter me; but you shall never persuade me that a bird can be a man. Sir, replied the queen, far be it from me to banter your majesty; nothing is more certain than what I have had the honour to tell you. I can assure your majesty, it is the king of Persia, named Beder, son of the celebrated Gulnare, princess of one of the largest kingdoms of the sea, nephew of Saleh, king of that kingdom, and grandson of queen Farasche, mother of Gulnare and Saleh; and it was the princess Jehaun-ara, daughter of the king of Samandal, who thus metamorphosed him into a bird. That the king might no longer doubt of what she affirmed, she told him the whole story, and stated that the princess Jehaun-ara had thus revenged herself for the ill treatment which king Saleh had used towards the king of Samandal her father.

The king had the less difficulty to believe this assertion of the queen, as he knew her to be a skilful magician. And as she knew every thing which passed in every part of the world, he was always by her

means timely informed of the designs of the kings his neighbours against him, and prevented them. His majesty had compassion on the king of Persia, and earnestly besought his queen to break the enchantment, that he might return to his own form.

The queen consented with great willingness. Sir, said she to the king, be pleased to take the bird into your closet, and I will shew you a king worthy of the consideration you have for him. The bird, which had ceased eating, and attended to what the king and queen said, would not give his majesty the trouble to take him, but hopped into the closet before him; and the queen came in soon after, with a vessel full of water in her hand. She pronounced over the vessel some words unknown to the king, till the water began to boil; when she took some of it in her hand, and sprinkling a little upon the bird, said, "By virtue of those holy and mysterious words I have just pronounced, and in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, who raises the dead, and supports the universe, quit the form of a bird, and re-assume that received from thy Creator."

The words were scarcely out of the queen's mouth, when, instead of a bird, the king saw a young prince of good shape, air, and mien. King Beder immediately fell on his knees, and thanked God for the favour that had been bestowed upon him. He then took the king's hand, who helped him up, and

kissed it in token of gratitude; but the king embraced him with great joy, and testified to him the satisfaction he had to see him. He would then have made his acknowledgments to the queen, but she was already retired to her apartment. The king made him sit at the table with him, and prayed him to relate how the princess Jehaun-ara could have the inhumanity to transform into a bird so amiable a prince; and the king of Persia immediately satisfied him. When he had ended, the king, provoked at the proceeding of the princess, could not help blaming her. It was commendable, said he, in the princess of Samandal not to be insensible of the king her father's ill-treatment; but to carry her vengeance so far, and especially against a prince who was not culpable, was what she could never be able to justify herself for. But let us have done with this subject, and tell me, I beseech you, in what I can farther serve you.

Sir, answered king Beder, my obligation to your majesty is so great, that I ought to remain with you all my life to testify my gratitude; but since your majesty sets no limits to your generosity, I intreat you to grant me one of your ships to transport me to Persia, where I fear my absence, which has been but too long, may have occasioned some disorder, and that the queen my mother, from whom I con-

cealed my departure, may be distracted under the uncertainty whether I am alive or dead.

The king readily granted what he desired, and immediately gave orders for equipping one of his largest ships, and the best sailors in his numerous fleet. The ship was soon furnished with all its complement of men, provisions, and ammunition; and as soon as the wind became fair, king Beder embarked, after having taken leave of the king, and thanked him for all his favours.

The ship sailed before the wind for ten days together, but on the eleventh the wind changed, and there followed a furious tempest. The ship was not only driven out of its course, but so violently tossed, that all its masts were brought by the board; and driving along at the pleasure of the wind, it at length struck against a rock and bulged.

The greatest part of the people were instantly drowned. Some few were saved by swimming, and others by getting on pieces of the wreck. King Beder was among the latter, when, after having been tossed about for some time by the waves and torrents, under great uncertainty of his fate, he at length perceived himself near the shore, and not far from a city that seemed of great extent. He exerted his remaining strength to reach the land, and was at length so fortunate as to be able to touch the

ground with his feet. He immediately abandoned his piece of wood, which had been of such great service to him; but when he came pretty near the shore, was greatly surprised to see horses, camels, mules, asses, oxen, cows, bulls, and other animals crowding to the shore, and putting themselves in a posture to oppose his landing. He had the utmost difficulty to conquer their obstinacy and force his way, but at length he succeeded, and sheltered himself among the rocks, till he had recovered his breath, and dried his clothes in the sun.

When the prince advanced to enter the city, he met with the same opposition from these animals, who seemed to intend to make him forego his design, and give him to understand it was dangerous to proceed.

King Beder, however, entered the city, and saw many fair and spacious streets, but was surprised to find no human beings. This made him think it was not without cause that so many animals had opposed his passage. Going forward, nevertheless, he observed divers shops open, which gave him reason to believe the place was not so destitute of inhabitants as he imagined. He approached one of these shops, where several sorts of fruits were exposed to sale, and saluted very courteously an old man who was sitting within.

The old man, who was busy about something,

lifted up his head, and seeing a youth who had an appearance of grandeur in his air, started, asked him whence he came, and what business had brought him there? King Beder satisfied him in a few words; and the old man farther asked him if he had met any body on the road? You are the first person I have seen, answered the king, and I cannot comprehend how so fine and large a city comes to be without inhabitants. Come in, sir; stay no longer upon the threshold, replied the old man, or peradventure some misfortune may happen to you. I will satisfy your curiosity at leisure, and give you a reason why it is necessary you should take this precaution.

King Beder entered the shop, and sat down by the old man. The latter, who had received from him an account of his misfortunes, knew he must want nourishment, therefore immediately presented him what was necessary to recover his strength; and although king Beder was very earnest to know why he had taken the precaution to make him enter the shop, he would nevertheless not be prevailed upon to tell him any thing till he had done eating, for fear the sad things he had to relate might spoil his appetite. When he found he ate no longer, he said to him, You have great reason to thank God that you got hither without any accident. Alas! why? demanded king Beder, much surprised and alarmed.

Because, answered he, this city is the *City of*

Enchantments, and is governed by a queen, who is not only one of the finest of her sex, but likewise a notorious and dangerous sorceress. You will be convinced of this, added he, when you know that these horses, mules, and other animals which you have seen, are so many men, like ourselves, whom she has transformed by her diabolical art. And when young men, like you, enter the city, she has persons planted to stop and bring them, either by fair means or force, before her. She receives them in the most obliging manner; caresses them, regales them, lodges them magnificently, and gives them so many reasons to believe that she loves them, that she never fails of success. But she does not suffer them long to enjoy this happiness. There is not one of them but she has transformed into some animal or bird at the end of forty days. You told me all these animals presented themselves to oppose your landing, and hinder your entering the city. This was the only way in which they could make you comprehend the danger you were going to expose yourself to, and they did all in their power to prevent you.

This account exceedingly afflicted the young king of Persia: Alas! cried he, to what extremities has my ill-fortune reduced me! I am hardly freed from one enchantment, which I look back upon with horror, but I find myself exposed to another much

more terrible. This gave him occasion to relate his story to the old man more at length, and to acquaint him of his birth, quality, his passion for the princess of Samandal, and her cruelty in changing him into a bird the very moment he had seen her and declared his love to her.

When the prince came to speak of his good fortune, in finding a queen who broke the enchantment, the old man to encourage him said, Notwithstanding all I have told you of the magic queen is true, that ought not to give you the least disquiet, since I am generally beloved throughout the city, and am not unknown to the queen herself, who has much respect for me; therefore it was your peculiar good fortune which led you to address yourself to me rather than to any one else. You are secure in my house, where I advise you to continue, if you think fit; and, provided you do not stray from hence, I dare assure you, you will have no just cause to complain of my insincerity.

King Beder thanked the old man for his kind reception, and the protection he was pleased so readily to afford him. He sat down at the entrance of the shop, where he no sooner appeared, but his youth and good person attracted the eyes of all who passed that way. Many stopped and complimented the old man on his having acquired so fine a slave, as they

imagined the king to be; and they were the more surprised as they could not comprehend how so beautiful a youth could escape the queen's knowledge. Believe not, said the old man, this is a slave: you all know that I am not rich enough nor of rank to have one of this consequence. He is my nephew, son of a brother of mine who is dead; and as I had no children of my own, I sent for him to keep me company. They congratulated his good fortune in having so fine a young man for his relation; but could not help telling him they feared the queen would take him from him. You know her well, said they to him, and you cannot be ignorant of the danger to which you are exposed, after all the examples you have seen. How grieved would you be if she should serve him as she has done so many others whom we knew.

I am obliged to you, replied the old man, for your good-will towards me, and I heartily thank you for the care you seem to take of my interest; but I shall never entertain the least thought that the queen will do me any injury, after all the kindness she has professed for me. In case she happens to hear of this young man, and speaks to me about him, I doubt not she will cease to think of him, as soon as she comes to know he is my nephew.

The old man was exceedingly glad to hear the commendations they bestowed on the young king of

Persia. He was as much affected with them as if he had been his own son, and he conceived a kindness for him, which augmented every day during the stay he made with him.

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NOTES.

[1] ROBBERIES of this audacious cast are not uncommon in the most populous cities of Asia, and have even happened in Calcutta.

[2] In my fragment it is called the kingdom of Hujjum, or the Persian Empire.

[3] Old wells, tombs, and deserted buildings are the scenes in which genii, according to oriental tradition, delight to dwell.

[4] The sovereigns of the East in the metropolis, and their viceroys in the provincial capitals, generally presided for some hours every day in courts of final appeal; and the neglect of this duty to the subject has always been rapidly followed by the decline and fall of the offending dynasty. To this neglect the emperors of Hindoostan and Persia owed their ruin. A despotic sovereign must be his own lord chancellor, to soften the letter of the law, or set aside unjust decrees of royal representatives; but happy is that country, however intricate its laws, where final decision rests not with the opinion of an individual, who cannot always be free from partiality, however well intentioned, and must be often deceived by those in whom he trusts for fair representation of facts.

[5] Resembling in splendour the full moon.

[6] The haughty.

[7] A circumstance by no means improbable. In the East kites and vultures will pounce upon any thing red in a person's hand, and even upon dishes of meat as carried from the kitchens which are at a distance from the houses. They hover in great numbers over the office-courts to seize the offals of a feast, and the feast itself if not strictly watched.

[8] There is no God but the Deity, and Mahummud is the prophet of the Deity.

[9] Possessing the world.

[10] Among the Moosulmauns stories of the Guebres, or remnants of the ancient Persians, adorers of fire, sacrificing young Mahummedans, are as current as those circulated and believed formerly among Christians, of the Jews offering up Christian infants at the passover.

[11] The heroic.

[12] This is by no means an exaggerated picture of the occasional fury of eastern ladies towards their servants.

[13] The glory of the faith.

[14] The vicious.

[15] The story of Noor ad Deen is very similar to that of Timon of Athens, in his own conduct, and that of his pretended friend.

[16] A noted musician in the reign of Haroon al Rusheed, and celebrated in the works of many Oriental poets by the name of Isaak of Moussul, being a native of that city, as the first vocal and instrumental performer of his age.

[17] Such unequal progresses in life, not uncommon in Asia, have by the French revolution been seen in Europe. Bonaparte is an emperor: the rest we leave to the reader's contemplation.

[18] The full moon.

[19] Adorning the world.

[20] The flower of the pomegranate in its glowing red, resembling flame.

[21] Prudent.

[22] May not the perusal of this story have first given Swift the idea of his Laputa, &c.?

END OF VOL. III.

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Scott, Jonathan

The arabian nights entertainments

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